The Spokesman Weekly

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WATERY GRAVES

Numerous bodies of murdered youngmen, all of them Sikhs and between ages of 15 and 25, have been fished out of various canals in Punjab, especially in the districts of Ludhiana, Sangrur and Ropar, which are nowadays hotbeds of militant activities and, thus, the centres of state repression also. The million-dollar question is: Who dumped them into these watery graves? The theory of suicides, through drowning, gets punctured at the very outset, as almost all these men had their legs tied and their hands fastened behind their back with a belt either of leather or of steel; not only this, their bodies were also loaded with some weights so that they would sink to the bottom of the canal immediately and would reappear on the surface of the water after they get bloated with water. No person, however desperate to end his life, could do all the above things himself. This can be the handiwork of other persons.

Many options must be examined. Normal murders, either out of family feuds or personal vengeance, are ruled out because all the victims were more or less of the same age group and were definitely Sikhs with long hair and beards. Another argument can be that these could be abducted persons or rival gang members killed by the militants. Anyone, with the slightest knowledge of guerilla warfare, would not subscribe to this theory, for it suggests that first the militants committed the crime at some place and then carried the bodies all the way to a canal. In all the killings which have taken place in Punjab, the militants have vanished from the scene after the crime. The needle of suspicion, therefore, points ominiously to the security forces whose involvement in extra-judicial killings is well known. Dumping of the bodies into the canal is the safest way of preventing identification. If the body is dumped somewhere else, it would be discovered sooner or later, torture marks would be visible, and, above all, besides ascertaining the cause of death, the person would be identified. Once the person is identified, there may be many among his relatives or friends who were eye-witnesses to the arrest of the dead man by the security forces.

Throwing bodies into the canals after stripping off the clothes ensures that there will be no identification. The security forces have abundant manpower and vehicles at their disposal and can easily move a body from anywhere without being spotted or checked. Even otherwise, canal bridges have become notorious for what are dubbed as "encounters" between the security forces and the militants and for accomplices of suspected militants being taken for recovery of arms. Invariably, after these "encounters", the police claim that the detained person had "escaped," though in actuality he was done to death.

It is now a firmly established fact that fake encounters and custodial deaths are endemic to the Punjab police and are the sole means of dealing with those who fall foul of the force. The rot of the police in Punjab is symptomic of the collapse of the state administration in face of the militant threat.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Appeal To UN Chief

Six Panthic organisations, which spearheaded the call for boycotting the recent Lok Sabha and Punjab assembly elections, are likely to submit a detailed memorandum on "discrimination against Sikhs and gross violation of human rights in India" to United Nations Secretary-General Dr Boutros Ghali when he visits New Delhi later this month. As top leaders of these organisations are under detention, the drafting job has been undertaken by intellectuals close to them. But the draft would be shown to these detained leaders before submission to Dr Ghali.

Very often in the past, Sikh case has, unfortunately, fallen by the wayside because of bad drafting, absence of supporting evidence, and faulty English. The most classic example was of a petition filed in the supreme court a few years ago about illegal detention of thousand of Sikhs: this petition did not contain the names and addresses of a few amongst such person affected. Naturally, the supreme court dismissed it. Such a blunder must be avoided this time.

The proposed memorandum, while highlighting the army's invasion of the Golden Temple complex and demolition of the Akal Takht, highest seat, spiritual and temporal, of the Sikhs in June 1984, must be accompanied by photos of the havoc caused, the burning of the Sikh library containing rare manuscripts and records and the massacre of pilgrims who found themselves holed within the complex. Mention also must made of frequent police raids subsequently of the holy complex and other gurdwaras, as they constitute sacrilege.

While detailing the orgies of arson, loot and killing of Sikhs in New Delhi and 200 other Indian cities, following the assassination of Mrs Indira Gandhi, the memorandum must give the names and addresses of all those lynched and burnt alive in the most heartless manner. Mention also be made of the fact that while the central government had merely admitted the killing of 2,733 persons in the Indian capital during those fateful days, the Mishra commission, appointed by the government itself, had put their number between 3,500 and 5,000. This would expose the government be independent probe reports and those of human rights groups must also be solicited.

Dr Ghali must be told how various draconian laws, especially the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA), have been misused in Punjab to browbeat Sikhs into abject surrender, merely because the Akalis are serious contenders for power in the state and this is anathema to New Delhi rulers.

SGPC Budget Meeting

Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee's budget session was a lack-lustre affair. There were no fireworks or serious discussion on the items involved. Perhaps because SGPC President Gurcharan Singh Tohra is detained under TADA since February 9 for organising a march against the polls for Lok Sabha and Punjab assembly. The Rs 42.77 crore budget provides two innovations: Rs 50 lakhs for construction of an engineering college at Fatehgarh Sahib which would start functioning from the next academic year, and three English-medium public schools, one each in Majha, Doaba and Malwa regions of the state. Financial assistance has also been promised to several other educational institutions run either directly by SGPC or other Sikh bodies. Most welcome has been the grant of Rs 1.25 lakhs for the Pingalwara being run by Bhagat Puran Singh at Amritsar. On the Amrit Sanchar front, an allocation of Rs 10 lakhs looks too small, especially when the task involved is so massive and Sikh youths have to be kept in line and made to remain devotees of Sikh faith and follow Sikh tenets.

Resolutions passed follow the usual track. The house demanded the early release of not only prominent Sikh leaders, like Sardar Prakash Singh Badal, Sardar Tohra and Sardar Simranjit Singh Mann, but also that of Bhai Ranjit Singh who has been appointed as Jatheder of Akal Takht and who is now in Delhi's Tihar jail in connection with the murder of Nirankari Chief Gurbachan Singh for the past nine years. The mass arrests of sarpanches and panches and Akali activists and the "inhuman tortures" heaped on them came in for flak. The alleged police brutality at Dera Waddhag Singh, in Himachal Pradesh, was strongly condemned and action demanded against erring police officials.

As expected, the Beant Singh ministry was described as a fake government and a puppet of the centre, as it had ridden to power on the strength of merely five percent of the electorate. It was accused of trying to suppress the voice of all those who espoused the cause of Punjab, Punjabi and Punjabiat. The recent "assaults" on various Punjab papers, including *Ajit*, *Akali Patrika*, *Punjabi Tribune* and *Ai Di Awaz*, were rightly denounced.

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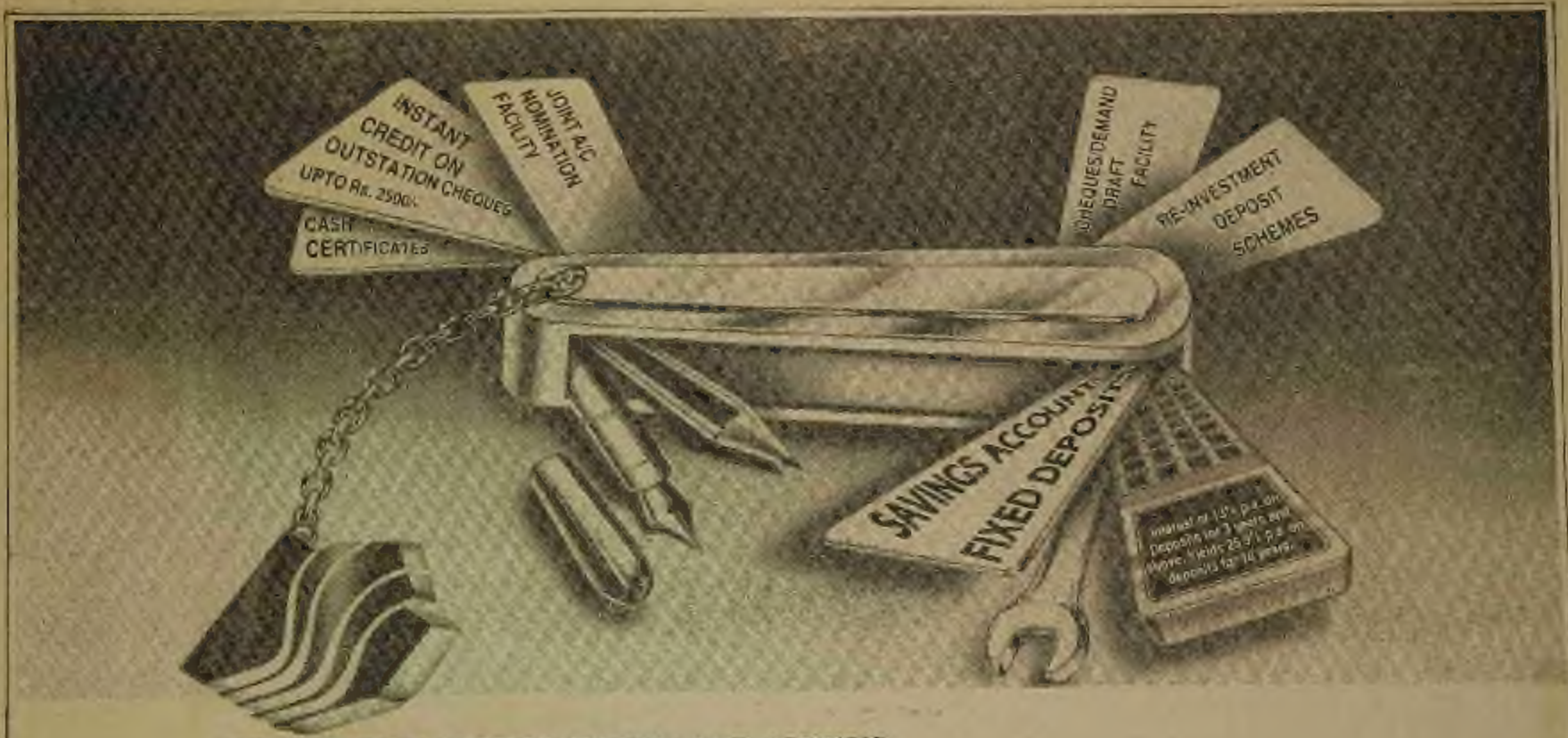

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Army's Role

The army's role in Punjab has been brought to the fore by a letter written by Mann Akali Dal Secretary Amritpal Singh Nakai to General S.F. Rodrigues, chief of army staff, in which the latter has been asked to check the veracity of a report that a large number of missing Sikh youths "had been eliminated or those arrested done to death in fake encounters and their bodies thrown into canals". This letter assumes significance as the unfortunate state of Punjab is virtually under army occupation and it runs the show for all practical purposes.

Chief Minister Beant Singh told the state assembly a few days ago that there were 13,535 Sikhs detained under TADA in Punjab jails. But Sardar Nakai claims, on basis of physical verification, that there are not as many Sikh prisoners under this notorious law in all the jails of Punjab. The natural conclusion, therefore, is that they have either been eliminated in fake encounters and their bodies thrown into canals, as reported by an English daily, or they have been sent to jails outside Punjab. General Rodrigues has been asked to verify the facts and let the Mann faction know. The army's role is all the more crucial because a large number of Sikhs are said to have been arrested with its cooperation. The list of such men must be with the army or their names and addresses must be within the knowledge of army officers. Such a list must be supplied to the Mann Akalis so that they cannot be eliminated by extra-judicial means.

The army chief and his officers must not lose sight of the fact that Punjab is a very sensitive state and is bound to be a theatre of war when chins are down with Pakistan. And when this happens, the cooperation of the people, especially in the rural areas, would be very essential. If these people feel alienated or rise in revolt, the army shall have to fight on two fronts—one against the enemy in front and another against hands of furious Sikhs seeking to avenge the death or disgrace of their dear and near ones. Then the memories of 1965 and 1971, when Sikhs rose as one man and fed the entire Indian army upto the last post on the war front, would be a thing of a distant past. Realising this, the army has been trying to put up a humane face but more needs to be done.

BSP Workers' Murder

Very justified was the row raised in Punjab assembly last week over the massacre of nine members of Bahujan Samaj Party near Nurmahal, in Jullundur district, on February 16 before the elections to Lok Sabha and the state assembly. The grouse was that the main accused had been identified but the government had failed to arrest him, as he was a Congress (I) worker. Chief Minister Beant Singh was on a weak wicket when he denied that the man, Mr Inderjit Singh, was a Congress worker. But the BSP group leader, Mr Satnam Singh Kainth, countered, saying that the person was an election agent of the Congress candidate from Nurmahal and cited some other instances. But Sardar Beant Singh had to retrace his steps on several counts. This does not speak highly of his administrative acumen or political foresight.

The chief minister offered an inquiry but this did not satisfy the BSP members who started shouting, staged a dharna in the well of the house, and forced two adjournments of the proceedings. Mr Kainth, speaking on a point of order, said that his party had earlier suspected militants to be behind the killings but the situation took a dramatic turn four days later when one of the injured persons identified one of the killers. Sardar Beant Singh at first tried to reason out that the killer had not been identified but a few minutes later told the house that he had asked the deputy inspector-general of Jullundur range to "arrest the accused" and report to him immediately. This shows that the chief minister was unnecessarily beating about the bush and shielding a criminal.

This is not the first time that the government had failed to take action in a case where the perpetrator of the crime had been fully identified. There are hundreds of more cases like this. BJP's Madan Mohan Mittal referred to the attack on his party candidate before the elections. We know how the police was used to prevent a number of candidates from filing their nominations, how so many were forced to withdraw or keep their election campaign in a low key, and how the security forces were eventually utilised to influence voters to exercise their franchise in favour of Congress(I). The elections, claimed to be free and fair, were, in fact, rigged. And thereby hangs the entire tale.

Justice Bains's Arrest

The arrest of Sardar A.S. Bains, a former judge of Punjab and Haryana high court and nowadays a human rights activist, betrays official arrogance and political purblindness. Chief Minister Beant Singh told the state assembly that he had no intention of releasing Sardar Bains but his charges about the latter's activities as head of Punjab Human Rights Organisation get blasted to pieces at the first glance. Sardar Bains, according to the chief minister, moved a seditious resolution on the occasion of Hola Mohalla at Anandpur Sahib last month but there is no mention of his name in FIR No. 41 filed in this connection at the local police station. Rather, he did not say anything which amounted to sedition.

There can be varied opinions about Sardar Bains's activities and views but no one, with a sane head on his shoulders, can accuse him of supporting separatism. Sardar Beant Singh argued in the state assembly that Sardar Bains and his human rights colleagues were "totally partial" and did not shed even a single tear "over the death of innocent people." Instead, he added, these people went out of their way to demonstrate their sympathy and support to the terrorists killed by the police." This argument is preposterous. Should persons, allegedly guilty of selective tear shedding, be clamped behind bars under TADA and NSA? Sardar Bains did say that the killing of non-Punjabi engineers in Sangrur district last month was unfortunate. But when the government, to which people look for justice, begins the liquidation of human beings in the name of fake encounters, it becomes the moral responsibility of all to condemn it.

Sardar Beant Singh also accused Sardar Bains of having recommended the release of nearly 3,000 detainees during the Barnala regime. If innocent persons are hauled up, their release is no crime, rather, it is manifestation of justice and fairplay. The chief minister has admitted that he had more than 13,000 persons in prison these days. Does he try to prove that unity and integrity of the country can be safeguarded only by filling jails with men who merely ask for redressal of their grouses?

Sardar Bains was handcuffed and paraded around; this is a clear violation of supreme court orders. If this is the fate of a former judge of the high court, the plight of lesser mortals can only be imagined. They continue to be victims of police repression without any hope of relief solongas Sardar Beant Singh is at helm of affairs.

Indo-Pak Amity

It is high time the governments of India and Pakistan took off their political blinkers, abjured their fears, prejudices and misgivings, buried their arms, and responded faithfully and abundantly to the irrepressible urge of peoples of both the countries to live in peace and harmony. This advice acquires the clothings of propriety all the more because of the unlimited and spontaneous outbursts of joy expressed in India over Pakistan's recent victory in World Cup cricket tournament sponsored jointly by Australia and New Zealand. The tune for this instant exultation was set by Pakistani captain Imran Khan when he said that his team's victory was a victory for the entire subcontinent. He declared "The cup that we have brought today is for the entire subcontinent—for Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. I know people in India and Bangladesh have great love for us. They appreciated our performance, prayed for us. That is what really matters". The strands of this noble sentiment run among people through the length and breadth of both India and Pakistan.

The present tension can be traced back to the ghastly nightmare of 1947 partition in which brother slaughtered brother in a fury of political insanity—from the Great Calcutta Killing to the heart-rending trek of refugees. Amidst that madness when men became beasts, Mahatma Gandhi made valiant efforts to inject some sense of amity and brotherhood. But, unfortunately, his crusade was cut short when he was slain by one of his own countrymen. From then onward, rulers of both the countries have indulged in confrontational politics and have fought three wars—1947-48, 1965 and 1971.

Now we have on our hands armed alert on the line of actual control in Kashmir, the IKLF, Khalistani infiltrators in Punjab and Hizbul secessionist in Kashmir, the Hindutva and the Islamic assertion, and, last but not the least, the threat of nuclear bomb. We have built forbidding walls of hatred between ourselves, and the two governments do not hesitate to make an exhibition of this before the world. We have, by mutual consent, introduced a visa system, under which our citizens have to report to the police station every few days as if we are suspected criminals. Visa holders from distant lands are allowed to move about freely in our countries but not the nationals of the two neighbours. Such barriers must be pulled down.

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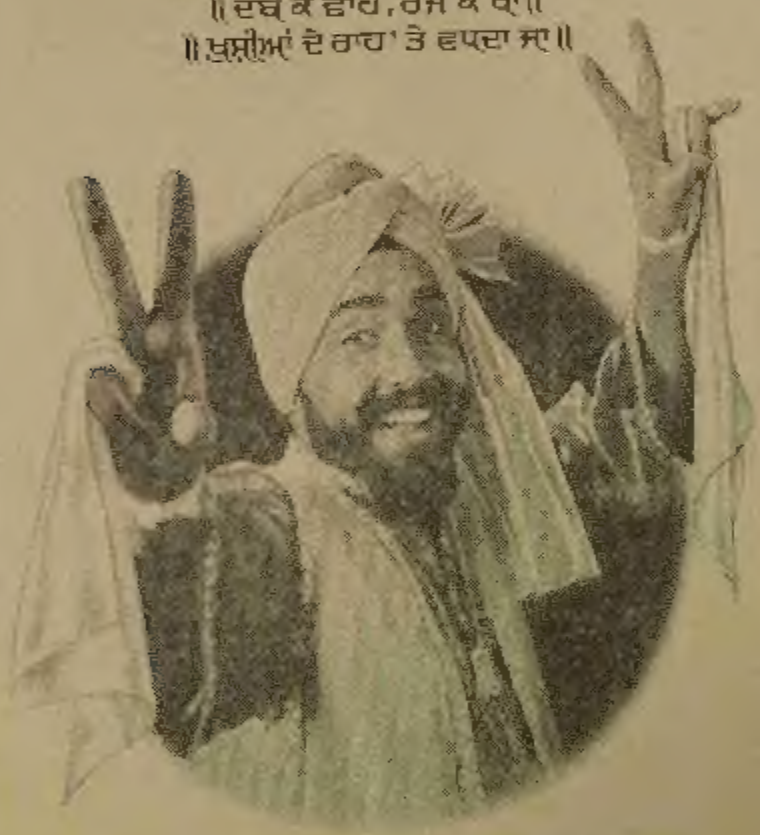
॥ ਓ ਜੱਟਾ, ਆਈ ਵਿਸਾਖੀ ॥
॥ ਕਰ ਲੈ ਫ਼ਸਲ ਤੇ ਧਨ ਦੀ ਰਾਖੀ ॥
॥ ਦੱਬ ਕੇ ਵਾਹ, ਰੱਜ ਕੇ ਖਾ ॥
॥ ਖੁਸ਼ੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਰਾਹ' ਤੇ ਵਧਦਾ ਜਾ ॥



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ਸਟੇਟ ਬੈਂਕ
ਸਪੈਸ਼ਲ ਟਰਮ ਡਿਪਾਜ਼ਿਟ ਯੋਜਨਾ

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GURU GOBIND SINGH

The Baisakhi day of 1699 marked the birth of the Khalsa. Guru Gobind Singh, in the true democratic tradition, did not resort to nominating the five beloved ones 'Piyaras' Instead, to the congregation present at the time, he threw a challenge five times saying that he required the Sikhs ready to offer their heads in the service of God and defence of man. The challenge was open. It was not directed to any particular caste. This was not a mere coincidence. It was done on purpose. By restricting his selection of Panj Piyaras, the Guru did not intend to create any privileged class of people. He wanted volunteers. His concern was the free volition of those who showed willingness to come forward. No rewards were offered. No allurements were held out. The call was clear and unambiguous. The Guru had demanded head in the name of God and humanity. The call was willingness to offer supreme sacrifice. The history offers no parallel to such a call. Now the response. The response was as soul stirring as the call was challenging. The challenge was met five times by persons who came from different parts of India and belonged to diverse castes. Daya Ram was a Khatri of Lahore. Dharam Das was a Jat of Delhi. Mohkam Chand was a washerman of Dwarka (Gujrat). Himmat was a water carrier of Jagannath Puri (Orissa) and Sahib Chand was a barber of Bidar (Andhra). These five volunteers formed the nucleus of the new self-abnegating, martial and casteless fellowship of the Khalsa that came into being on the Baisakhi day of 1669. The Guru administered "Amrit" (Pure nectar). This had been fortified with the double edged sword (Khanda) to indicate symbolically that the Khalsa is to be a fine blend of courtesy, humility and strength. The Guru hailed the Panj Piyaras, the pure ones, as 'Singhs', which literally means 'Lions'. The Guru Gobind Singh, in turn, supplicated them for initiation and he was baptized with the same ceremony:

Hail Guru Gobind Singh
He is the Guru and also the disciple

This was born the fraternity of the Khalsa, the martial arm of the Sikhs in the Uniform of Keshas (long hair), Kangha (comb), Kara (steel bracelet), Kachha (short drawer) and Kirpan (sword). Not only did Guru Gobind Singh militarise his followers to fight the alive rather than surrender their faith. When his wife, in sorrow and anguish turned to the Guru, he lovingly pointed to the congregation of the Sikhs and said:

"What if we have lost four sons, here are thousands still living".

It is a unique example of which there is no parallel in the recorded history. By this, the Guru created a new society of people. These people imbibed a tradition of fire and iron, sacrifice and death. Every page of Sikh history shines with a hundred names: one name is enough to kindle a whole life with the noblest of spiritual heroism.

The names of Guru Arjan Dev, Guru Tegh Bahadur, Guru Gobind Singh, his four sons and the five beloved disciples and of the martyrs and devotees of the heroes of war and peace, provide the Sikhs with an inexhaustible and intense past which no other race, with centuries of history, behind it can match in its life-giving, death-despising, self-sacrificing powers of inspiration. Guru Gobind Singh gave the Sikhs fiery baptism of God's warm blood. Death holds no fear for the Sikh. And that is how Guru Gobind Singh said that the Sikh shall live:

There is no other door to everlasting life but through death like this.

Through love, and obedience like this,

Very little life is the ego of man.

All is there in the shining sun of his soul.

He knew all about the after-death

He led us on.

The Guru himself used to lead his troops in battle and on several occasions he confronted Moghul Commanders single handed. Before going into battle, Guru Gobind Singh always invoked the blessings of God and those of the Gurus who had proceded him. His prayer was:

"May the Holy Sword assist me!

The Martial Traditions of the Sikhs

By : Lt. Col. J.S. GULERIA (Retd.)

tyrants, but he also laid down the solid and impregnable foundations of the democratic institution of the Khalsa, completely free of all caste and creed barriers. The constant prayer of Guru Gobind Singh to God was:

"O God, grant me this boon,

Never should I turn away from good deeds;

Never when fighting adversity should I be afraid,

But with a firm resolve, should I achieve victory;

Over my heart should I have complete control.

O Lord, that is what I crave of Thy Name,

When finally time comes for me to rest,

Let me die in the thick of the battles."

These are noble and inspiring words. These words portray the picture of a true warrior who wages a battle for truth. He has no fear of death. His resolve is firm. He is in complete control of himself. The Name of the God is on his lips. Thus he marches on to victory. When the time comes for him to depart, he wants to die in the thick of the battles. That is the crowning glory for which he aspires. This is the authentic martial spirit which the great Guru bequeathed to the Sikhs. History is a witness to the fact that through all times of adversity and challenge, the Sikhs have proved themselves true to this spirit. They have upheld this tradition even at the cost of their lives. Death holds no fear for them. The valour of the Sikhs, the beloved ones of the Gurus, has become proverbial throughout the world.

The highest example of valour was set by Guru Gobind Singh himself. The Guru sent out his two sons from the besieged fortress of Chamkour Sahib to face the hordes of the Moghuls and meet an end worthy of the heroes. The Guru's own other sons, who were betrayed into the hands of the Governor of Sirhind, preferred to be buried

Having first remembered the sword I meditate on Guru Nanak,

Then on Guru Angad, Amardas and Ramdas, may they assist me!

I call to my mind Arjan, Har Gobind and the Holy Har Rai!

I meditate on the Holy Har Krishan, a sight of whom dispels all suffering!

I invoke Tegh Bahadur that the nine treasurers may hasten to my home.

Ye Holy Gurus, everywhere assist me."

Guru Gobind Singh did not, however, want his Sikhs to be unnecessarily belligerent or querulous. He wanted them to uphold freedom, faith and resist oppression. While continuing to spread the message of love of Guru Nanak and other Gurus, he took upon himself to instil a sense of genuine militancy and trained them in the techniques of warfare so that they could protect the oppressed and the weak from the onslaughts of the tyrant. His justification for taking to sword is given in his message "Zafarnama", to Aurangzeb. He wrote:

"When all efforts to restore peace prove useless and no words avail

Lawful is the flash of steel then and right it is the sword to hail."

In his "History of the Punjab," Sayyad Mohammad Latif describes Guru Gobind Singh as under:

"He is a king on his masnad, yet the poorest among the poor, laboured hard with Him. He is a born statesman and yet a saint, for he knows no guile; a law giver in the pulpit and a champion in the field."

Throughout his life of 42 years, Guru Gobind Singh waged a ceaseless war against tyranny, ignorance, oppression and to defend his religious faith. It is a miracle how he fought the combined jealousies of hill chieftains who were pawns in the hands of the Moghul

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Kings. He faced the mighty mughal armies in many actions. He was not beaten down. He stood up and fought with courage and determination. His spirit was indomitable. He composed stirring poems which helped to infuse the martial spirit in his followers. He united them in a fearless group of men devoted to the cause of righteousness and truth. Since his sword was meant to protect the weak, he sang its praise in the following inspiring words:

Sword, that smiteth in a flash
That scatters the armies of the wicked
In the great battlefield
O Thou symbol of the brave,
Thine arm is irresistible, thy brightness sheweth forth
The blaze of the splendour dazzling like the sun.
Sword, thou art the protector of saints,
Thou art the scourge of the wicked,
Shatterer of Sin, I take refuge in Thee
Hail to the Creator, Saviour and sustainer,
Hail to thee, sword supreme

This is a lofty poem from the pen of Guru Gobind Singh. According to him, the sword is the killer of the wicked, companion of the brave, protector of the innocent. It is raised against injustice and sin and is used to defend righteousness. By the display of his poetic genius, he salutes and hails the sword as the Creator, saviour and sustainer. By these words, he inculcated the spirit of unbounded confidence, total self-reliance and absolute courage in his followers. He did this in an age when the morale of the local populace was running at a low-ebb. They had been reduced to a state of abject surrender by the bigoted actions of the Mughal armies. He inspired the Khalsa with his own example of sacrifice. His father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, his great grand-father, Guru Arjan, and all his four sons laid down their lives in the service of the faith. The martial spirit of the Sikhs is thus soaked in pure blood of human sacrifice willingly and consciously offered at the altar of truth. It is a heroic spirit. I has no wile or cunningness about it. It is rooted in faith and conviction. It is not afraid of odds. This spirit does not evade or shun

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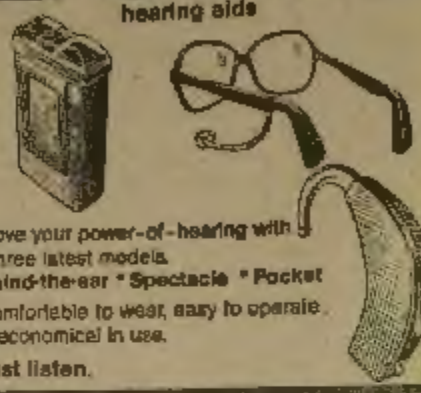

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A Sikh is born in freedom. He lives in freedom and if so required he willingly gives up his life in the defence of freedom. A proud heritage pulsates in their blood.

battle. It is ever willing to wage a ceaseless action. Even death holds no fear for such an inspired soldier of the Guru. The Sikhs, the soldiers of the Master enter any struggle in that heroic spirit. It is clear from their war chants with their martial rhythms. Here is one that ignites the blood in the veins and explodes like a volcano:

Khag, Khund, bihandang khal dal khandang,
Ati run mandang barbandang,
Bhujdand akhandang tej parchandang,
Jai anekandang ari shan prakhang,
Sukh sawang karang dharmat, dhrovane,
Ad bhi Sarang, ug sarabang
Jai Jai Jug Kuranang srista ubarang
Mam pratpalang Sri tevang.

Thou art the Destroyer, the annihilator
Of the hosts of ignorance and evil,
O Embellisher of the battlefield,
The punishment is stern and inexorable
Thy aspect resplendent, thy glory and splendour
dazzle even the sun
Thou bring st happiness to the holy
Thou crush st the wicked and scatter'st shadows
I seek thy refuge
Glory, O glory to thee, O sword
Thou art ever victorious, Guardian
Of the Universe, My protector and sustainer.

In the words of Puran Singh, "in the above chants of the master, the cannons boom, the arrows fly, the swords clash. And the very repetition of his chants makes us fly like flames, crying 'liberty! liberty! liberty!' The Sikhs do glorify the sword and hold it sacred but it is used in the defence of liberty. There can be an nobler use of the sword than the one taught by Guru Gobind Singh. It is the proud heritage of the Sikhs. In his great poem "The battle of Bhangani" in Chandi Charitra, Guru Gobind Singh took life to a new course of the flood and the storm. In this poem with its war like tone we hear the clash of steel and the spiritual impatience to die in the defence of one's faith.

Guru Gobind Singh was treacherously assassinated at Nanded by two mercenary Pathans. They were the hirelings of the Governor of the Punjab, Nawab Wazir Khan. But the Khalsa and the martial spirit awakened by him lived and blossomed. Within two years of his death on May 14, 1710, the Khalsa under Banda Singh Bahadur conquered Sirhind and avenged the martyrdom of Guru Gobind Singh's two sons, who had been buried alive by the Governor of Sirhind in 1704. The Mughal forces retaliated to avenge this and the Khalsa had to undergo a period of untold suffering and privation. The Mughals made a determined bid to exterminate the Sikhs. They instituted regular schedule of awards (Inams) for those who assisted in the extermination of the Sikhs. Anybody who caught or killed a Sikh was rewarded fifty rupees. On the other hand, any one sheltering a Sikh was punished with death. But the immortal Khalsa survived all ordeals. The Sikhs lived virtually with their homes on the saddles of their horses. They were constantly on the move and never failing to strike at the enemy whenever the opportunity came their way, they waged a relentless battle and added yet another glorious chapter to the martial history of the Sikhs. High tributes have been paid to the Sikhs' qualities of courage and integrity even by the Muslim historians of those times. One Nur Mohammad, a historian who accompanied Ahmed Shah Dhurrani at the time of his seventh raid on India, writes:

"If you wish to learn the art of war, come face to face with them (Sikhs) in the field. They will demonstrate to you in such a way that one and all will praise them for it. If you want to learn the science of war, O swordsmen, learn from them how to face any enemy like a hero and to get safely out of action..."

"If you do not know the Hindustani language, I shall tell you that the word "Singh" means a 'Lion'. Truly, they are like lions in battle and, in times of peace, they surpass Hatim in generosity.

"In no case would they slay a coward, nor would they put an obstacle in the way of a fugitive. They do not plunder the wealth and ornaments of a woman, be she a well-to-do lady or a maid servant."

It is clear that even when engaged in war, the Sikhs observe a code of honour and conduct. They fight a clean battle. They never attacked the unarmed, harmed the women or took an unfair advantage of their adversary. Such was the high mark of their chivalry. Khafi Khan, another Muslim historian, commenting on the battle of Lohgarh, has this to say:

"It is impossible for me to describe the fight which followed the battle of Lohgarh. The Sikhs in their Faqir's dress struck terror into the royal troops. The number of casualties among the latter was so large that for a time it appeared as if they were going to lose. Reinforcement of 60,000 horse and foot closely invested Banda Singh's fully retreat. For want of provisions, the Sikhs were reduced to rigorous straits. But Banda Singh was far from vanquished. The Sikhs made a desperate night attempt and escaped into the hills of Sivalike and later came out of their mountain haunts to recover their lost territories and occupied once again Sadhaura and Lohgarh."

Yet another eye witness account of the bravery of the Sikhs has been given in 'Ibratnamah' by Mir Qasim. This is an account of Farrukh Siyar's campaign. Mir Qasim says:

"Brave and daring deeds were amazing. Twice or Thrice a day, some forty of them (Sikhs) would come out of their enclosure to gather grass for their animals, and when the combined forces of the Emperor went up oppose them, they made short work of the Moghals with arrows, muskets and small swords, and then disappeared. Such was the terror of these people and the fear of the sorcery of their Chief that the commanders of the Royal army prayed that God might so ordain things that Banda should seek safety in flights."

In all battles, the Khalsa fought back with unsurpassed determination, iron grit and valour and ultimately gave a crushing blow to their adversaries. The Dal Khalsa bravely fought the Moghuls and the plundering hordes of Ahmad Shah Durrani and by 1772, they succeeded in establishing their supremacy between the river Indus and Jamuna. This put an end to the guerilla warfare and the resounding war cry of the Khalsa "Sat Sri Akal" resounded throughout the North-West Frontier. The valiant Sikhs had thus succeeded in rolling back the waves of invaders into their very homes. The exploits and conquests of the Sikh Army under the leadership of Maharaja Ranjit Singh provides yet another glorious chapter on the martial traditions of the Sikhs. It was a well trained Army and under the farsighted and sagacious leadership of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the process of British expansion was halted. An account of the bravery of the Sikhs is provided by the famous historian Cunningham in the Anglo-Sikh wars, which ultimately resulted in the annexation of the Punjab. He was present at the battle fields and he describes thus one of the last scenes:

"—Although assailed on either side by squadrons of horse and battalions on foot, no Sikh offered to submit and no disciple of Guru Gobind Singh asked for quarter. They everywhere showed a front to the victor, and walked slowly and sullenly away while many rushed singly forth to meet assured death by contending with a fortitude. The victor looked with solid wonderment upon the indomitable courage of the vanquished."

As stated earlier, a Sikh soldier takes up arms to fight injustice, repression and tyranny. He wages battles to defend certain values which he cherishes more than life itself. His fight is clean. His qualities are aptly described by the now famous phrase of Sir Winston Churchill, "Magnanimous in victory and defiant in defeat". A true Sikh never turns his back on battle. He prefers death to defeat. This tradition has been kept alive by the blood of the Khalsa which he sheds willingly as a matter of sacred obligation wherever the situation demands. He has an ardent love of freedom. It can neither be suppressed nor stifled. A Sikh is born in freedom. He lives in freedom and if so required, he willingly gives up his life in the defence of freedom. A proud heritage pulsates in their blood.

The later movements, the formation of the Gadhar Party which was inspired by some Sikh patriots living on the West-Coast of North America, the Akali and Babbar Akali movements bear an eloquent testimony to the contribution of the valiant Sikhs in the cause of India's freedom. The Sikhs were undeniably the worst

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sufferers in the wake of the partition of India in 1947. The Sikhs, lovers of freedom, bore their scars without demur. They went through all their sufferings with commendable patience and through their qualities of perseverence, discipline, service and sacrifice taught to them by the Gurus, they emerged once again as a fully integrated people ready to play their role in an Independent India. A Sikh is the pride of the Indian Defence forces. A full length account, which is beyond the scope of this article, is required for a proper appreciation of the contribution of the Sikhs to the three services. Their role of honour is truly long and inspiring. It fills every Indian with pride. With the Sikhs, the courage is in their blood and gallantry is in their tradition. The motivation of a Sikh, the true disciple of the Gurus, is explained in the following lines :

Glory to noble souls
Who on their earthly way
Carry upon their lips
The Name of the Lord,
And ever contemplate
Deep within their hearts
The good fight's spirit—
Knowing that the body
Is a fleeting vesture.
They make the Lord's song,
They make the Lord's Name
A boat to carry them
Over life's rough ocean.
They wear as a garment
That is as a fortress
Serene detachment.
Divine knowledge
Is the light of their minds
Their cleaner's broom
In their wise hands
With it they sweep
All cowardice
And all falsehood.

A Sikh is a soldier of immortability. He never lives ignobly. His vision transcends even the barrier of death. It is rightly so. He has taken "Amrit" (Nectar). The Khalsa is eternal.

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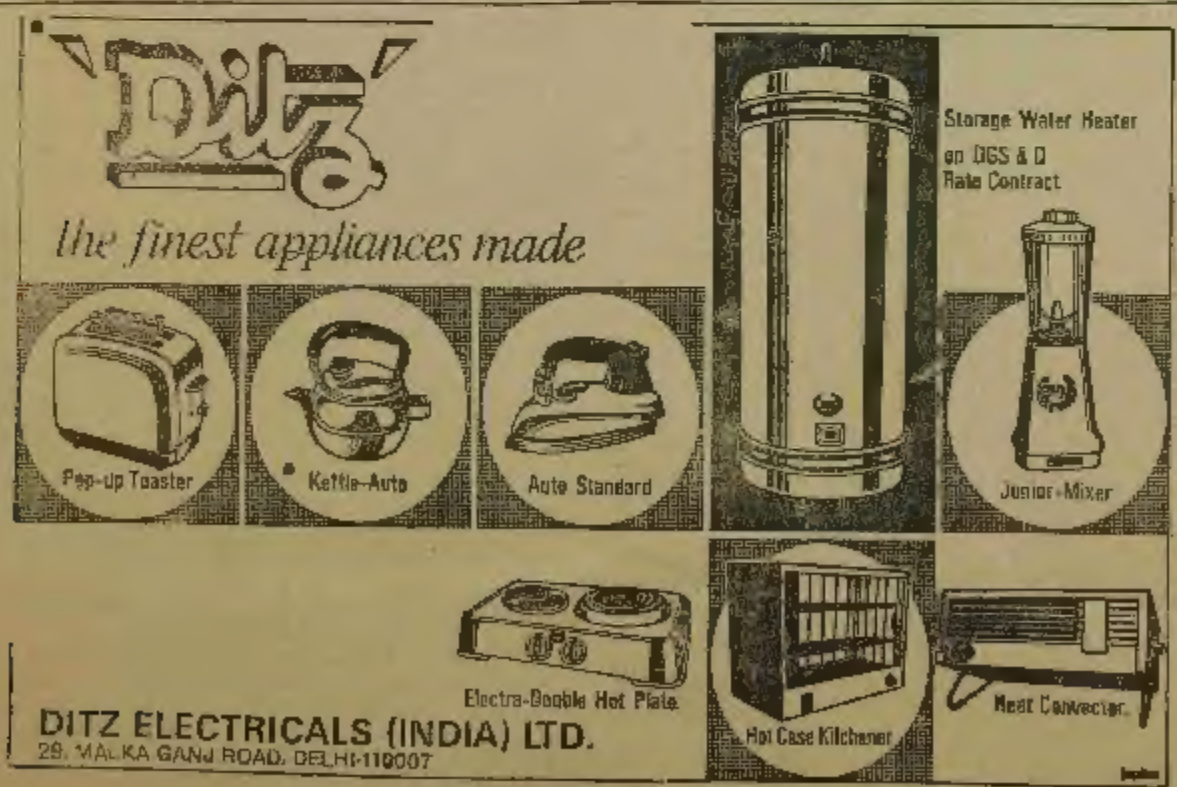

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PATH OF LOVE

Love is warm attachment, affectionate devotion, desire and passion between sweethearts. In the spiritual sense, it is a bridegroom relationship between God and man. A love song is a token of Love at a highly emotional level. The head, the heart is Love in totality, so is Divine Love and Holy War a complete life. Bible says (Philippians-1:1) "Put on the whole armour of God."

Years ago, while a student I heard a Christian Missionary preaching on Christianity that God loves human beings so much that he gave his only son—Jesus—on the cross in forgiveness for our sins. "This man whose birthday we are here to celebrate", he said "preached Love—to turn the other cheek to receive the second slap". The Pacifist movement in every religion quotes the Love story of Jesus. Christians believe (Exodus, 34:6,7) that "The Lord, the Compassionate and Gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in Love and faithfulness, maintaining Love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin".

He preached Love Thy Neighbour against the prevailing tooth for tooth and eye for eye doctrine. But "God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). "God have mercy on me, a sinner" says Luke (18:13). He goes further (6:27,28) "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who hurt you, pray for those who ill treat you". This is the Christians way of Love.

The sacrifice of Christ has made the world a better place to live. He says (John, 16:7) "Greater Love has no other than this that one may lay down his life for his friends".

The Sikh faith, as is well known, has precisely the same approach to life. As I discovered the very next day attending the birthday of Guru Gobind Singh, 70 years ago, that he gave not his own life, but that of his father, great grandfather, his four sons, for us, the sinners. His entire family he sacrificed to save the Saints and the sinners alike, and in the protection of the Dharma (Religion which is the Way of Love) the only way of the ways, he taught.

He said *Char gave to kin bhaa, jiwat kaho hazar*. Death is God's gift given to humans on birth. If four are gone in the hands of death several thousands are alive, so nothing is lost in the game of Love.

For the condition is: *Jo tau prem khelan ka chau Sir dhar tali gali meri aau*. (A.D. 1412) If you desire to play Love then place your head on your palm before you take to my way.

Nanak eeak sot akhau jo sir dhare utar. (p. 1247). Only he can be called a disciple who cuts off his head for the Guru. *Tan man dhan sab saup gur kau, haukam manio pyari*. (p. 918). Offer thou the body, mind and wealth to the Guru and accept his command. Then you shall find God, is the Truth which Guru preached as he practised himself.

What Is Love

Love is a universal principle of Life. Poets, Philosophers, Saints, Scholars, soldiers, beggars and Kings alike have written on Love. It is here that East and West meet.

P.B. Shelley writes:—

I love love—though he has wings,
And like Light can flee,
But above all other things,
Thou art Love and Life. O come

"Life is a vast business. A part of it is given over to making people happy, and a part to the making of money, building ships building bridges, and babies toys". All these pursuits are useful and valuable. But Love is the suit that savors the whole and drives away the mists so that the sun may eternally shine. It is the greatest thing in the world and the most important ingredient that enters into Life and work". In this statement is compared the virtues of *Seva* (selfless service), *Kirt* (honest work) and even *Simran* (Remembrance of God) with Love. Love is truly liberation and the Liberator. Liberate your Love and the Love Liberated breeds greater love everywhere it goes. It is contagious. Liberate your love. Keep giving away. If there is a damage done it is easily repaired. God gives us love. Something to love. He lends us"—(Tennyson), our life!

Alice Cary Chimes in "He who loves best his fellow man is loving God the holiest way he can." Here is a prompter to those who think that faith is dearer than love and they can destroy innocent human life in the name of religion. The Christian Union view that "religion which fails us in the everyday trials and experiences of Life has somewhere in it a flaw. It should be more than a sustain us in the rushing tide, and land us exhausted and dripping on the other side. It ought, like comes from above, to be always, day by day, to our souls as the wings of a bird, bearing us away from and beyond the impediments which seek to hold us down. If the Divine Love be a conscious presence, an indwelling force with us, it will do this".

This message is the most important to the Sikhs living in the West, among Christians and imbibe some of the qualities of Life that would serve them better in Encounter, Interfaith dialogue or business dealings.

God is in fact, residing within man. The body is just a temple, a house for God to dwell in. Guru says—*Gur parsadi vekh tu, har mandar sareer sabh* (p. 1345). By the Grace of the Guru thou behold, with thee is the Temple of God within. *Sado kajur dur na jaah* (p. 116). Even as God with us. Never ever think thou that is far away. Know Him within thyself. Inside as God is in the form of spiritual Flame of Light of God the Niranker in the astral plane— *Antar jot nirantar Bani sacho sahib ho lai*. This Light inspires in us a true Love for God.

Love for God is in reality even to die in God. *Nanak jivtia mar rahau aisa Jogu kamaai* (p. 730). Die thou while living, O Nanak, follow thou such a yoga. *Har ki prem bhagati mani lina Nit bajae anhat bina* (p. 622). Love and devotion for God hath captivated my mind, and now ever tingeth the Anhad Bagpipe in my mind.

Love in the real sense, as already mentioned is to give, to give and to give body, mind and soul and be sacrifice time and again to the Lord. The true devotee enjoys Love dream like a bride waiting and waiting for the groom thus—"May these arms burn that embrace not the Lord. What with the bangle seller, what worth are these bangles? In order to seek His Love, I offer my severed head for His seat and without this head to serve Him (p. 538).

The true lover, would get Him at any price, as the Rig Vedic hymn (viii 1:5 also S.) indicates:—

Most Sacred In The Sikh Faith

By : Prof. GOPAL SINGH PURI, Liverpool (U.K.)

Once once more my heart, thy home.

To Vedic rishis religion is Love and devotion. They dedicated every action that leads to God for God is the Most Beloved One and arouses the finest sentiments in man in Love. Their prayer is a Love song, as in R.I. 10:12:—

Lover of song! may these songs of mine
Encompass Thee on all sides,
Exalting the Most Exalted One,
And Loving, may they be loved.

Love is the reward of Love, as Schiller says and Leibnitz sings that "To Love is to find pleasure in the happiness of person Loved". But to Goethe "We are shaped and fashioned by what we love". There are some like Disraeli, who acclaim that "we are born for Love. It is the principle of existence and its only end".

In the Adi Granth there are numerous hymns that stress that Life is Love. Just as a fish cannot live without water; the Chatrik pines for the elixir drop; as deer captivated by the sound of the drum rushes towards the death trap; as the humming bee seeking the flowers gets trapped, even such is the devotees is Love for God to find fulfilment (p. 208).

George Mathew Adams says,

O God! I will not sell Thee for the highest price.
Not for a thousand, nor for ten thousand.
O Mighty One!
Not for an infinite amount.
O Lord of countless wealth

Sir Walter Raleigh In his description of Love asks:—

Now what is Love? I pray thee tell
It is that fountain and that well,
Where pleasure and repentance dwell,
It is perhaps that sounding bell,
That calls all in to heaven or hell,
And this is Love, as I hear tell.
"Love is a circle that doth restless move

In the same sweet eternity of Love" says Herrick (1591-1674 in "Love what it is")

In the Indian family of Religions there are several paths to God—such as of Love and Devotion, Knowledge, Mysticism, Splendour, Action and Sacrifice. It is viewed by some scholars that the first five Gurus were the followers of the paths of Knowledge, Mysticism, Love and Devotion. They were mainly Raj Yogis. Like Jesus Christ, Guru Arjan gave his own life to save the sins of humanity.

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Our Gurus, although, accepted life in fullness, freedom, Prayer did not engage in actual armed struggle in the battle of Life. Only the Sixth Guru had to wear the two swords of Raj and Yog or Miri and Piri and engaged in warfare. This is in line with the Vedic Thought, as God is admired for strength conquering power and energy. The Vedic moral is the heroic outlook, no cowardice.

The Vedic God is the Ideal Hero with a will to victory. He is the Fearless, Lawful, Just, Honest, Kind, Loyal, Good and the Protector, of the weak, of the State, the Chiefs and the destroyer of evil doers. This is the path of Liberation of those who place trust in God.

Those who live or die while serving the weak, the meek, the oppressed and the truthful also love God. Quran (2. 154) records — "Do not say they are dead who are killed for God's sake— Rather they are living, even though you do not notice it —"

The dust returns to the earth as it was and the spirit returns to God who gave it (ECC1: 12.7), is the Christians view.

The Isa Upanishad (17) reiterates that "My breath and spirit goes to the Immortal, and the body ends in ashes". In the Bhagwad Gita (2.19-25) Lord Krishna says to Arjuna "One man believes he is the slayer, another believes he is the slain. Both are ignorant, there is neither slayer nor slain. You were never born, you will never die. As a man abandons his worn out clothes and acquires new ones so when the body is worn out a new one is acquired by the self, who lives within".

Those who die in the service of God go to heaven, and Sun Myang Moon in Divine Principles (4-16-77) states heaven is created by those people who live here on earth with unselfishness and an absolute God-centred-love". "As for the cowardly, the faithless, the polluted, as for murderers, fornicators, sorcerers, idolators and all liars, their lot shall be in the lake that burns with fire and sulphur, which is the second death (Revelation, 21.8).

Sikhism likewise believes (p. 1028) that— "There is a stream of fire from which emerges poisonous flames". But there is none else except the self. The waves of the ocean of fire are aflame and the senders are burning in them".

Thus we see that sacrifice of life is a noble act of Love. For Jesus says "Whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it (Mathew 16.25).

Love And War

"You shall not kill" (Exodus 30.13) is the basis of love in Judaism and Christianity. Hinduism (vide Laws of Manu 6.345) abhors murderer as worst offender. It is more wicked than a defamer, than a thief or I than he who injures with a staff.

Tao Te Ching calls weapons as instruments of evil— In war for the slaughter of the multitude let us weep with sorrow and grieve. For a victory let us observe the occasion with funeral ceremonies, he observes.

Buddha condemns even victory as it breeds hatred for the defeated to live in pain. Happily live the peaceful, giving up victory and defeat. Gita observes (6.5-6) that a person has the self as a friend when he has conquered himself. But if he rejects his own reality, the self will war against him. There are two orders of creation (16.6), one divine, and the other demonic. War and evil are in the mind of man as Rabbi Isaac says— "Man's evil inclination renews itself daily against him —"

Coleridge in his poem "In Love" says—

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame.

The love of moth for Light is the call for the sacrifice of his self for his beloved. Rumi, however, differs—

Let us write some other way
Love's secrets— Better sin.
Leave blood and noise and all of these
And speak no more of Shamas Tabrez.

For St. Bernard says "Love begins in the flesh and ends in the spirit." Guru Gobind Singh reiterates— "verily, verily I say unto thee, that only they that have loved have reached the Lord". In Japji Guru Nanak says:- All exist under His Will. And nothing stands outside. One attuned with His Will, is wholly freed, O Nanak. So love and war are one and the same in His Will.

Love Your Enemy

"Do good to him, who has done you an injury", says Tao. "Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with Good" (Romans 12-21) is the message of Christians. In Hadith of Bukhari the Prophet Mohammed said

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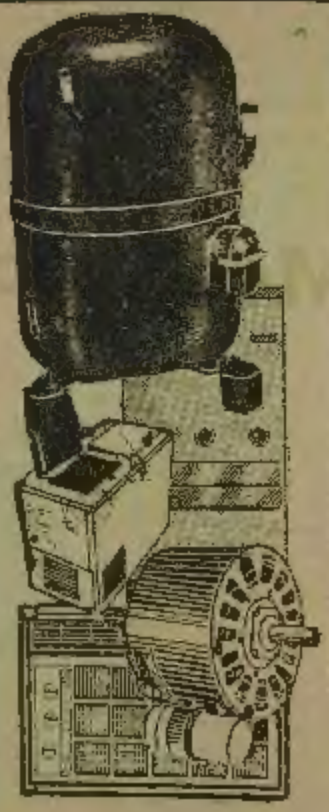

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The concept of 'Sant-Sipahi' is unique in the history of War and Religion. Saint is a man of Godly disposition and a soldier is a man of war. How are the two qualities or vocations reconciled in one and the same person is one of the fundamental features of the Sikh faith.

according to Anas ibn Malik, "Help your brother whether he is oppressed or oppressive. Anas replied to him, "O Messenger of God, a man who is oppressed I am ready to help, but how does one help an oppressor—" By hindering him doing wrong he said". So killing for killing's sake, in rage, hatred, revenge cannot be accepted, what is overlooked in Love.

The Quran (41:34-35) explains —The good and the evil deed are not alike. Repel the evil deed with one what is better, then lo! he between whom and you there was enmity shall become as though he were a bosom friend.

Judaism advises—"Aid an enemy before you aid a friend to subdue hatred".

Sun Myung Moon (7, 1-98) gives a very godly reason for loving your enemy. He says— "The reason why God does not punish even though He may see an enemy and have the urge to kill him and get revenge, is that he is thinking of the enemy's parents, wife and children who all love him.—God could you take revenge on your enemy? when you know all these things, you would even pray and help that person. The source of such a power to love your enemy is neither knowledge, nor money, nor earthly power. It is only true Love".]

Conquer anger by Love. Conquer evil by good" says Buddha. From "Turn the other Cheek", Farid goes still further (p. 1378) "Those who beat you," he says "with fists. Do not pay them in the same coin. But go to their house and kiss their feet".

Jesus says (Romans 12:19-20) "Beloved never avenge yourselves but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, Vengeance is Mine—I will repay, says the Lord. No, if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him to drink; for by doing so you will heap burning coals upon his head". So Peter adds (4:8), "Love covers a multitude of sins". Good deeds annul evil deeds. This is a reminder for the mindful, observes, Quran (11:114).

War Against Evil Is Love

Kabir says (p. 1412)—"He is the true hero who fights to protect the helpless. Though cut limb by limb, leaves not the field". It is the true message of Sikhism, to put which into practice Guru Gobind Singh had to don the uniform of saint and soldier and keep rosary and sword, wealth and armour to get on with help for downtrodden, the helpless, the pacifier and the Saints. Islam in such a situation has termed the war a jihad, a holy war.

Matthew (10, 34) talking of the mission writes "Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword". In Exodus (5:1) the Lord said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh and say to him. Thus says the Lord, let my people go, that they may serve me".

In Corinthians (10:3-5) is written—"Though we live in the world we are not carrying on a worldly war, for the weapons of our warfare are not worldly but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every proud obstacle to the knowledge of God, and take every thought for captive to obey Christ".

Islam has fought many a war of survival. They are all jihads. Holy in Hadith is written—The Prophet declared we have returned from the lesser holy war (al jihad-al-asghar) to the greater holy war (al jihad-al-Akbar). Quran (8:66) prays, O Prophet! Exhort the believers to fight. If there be of you twenty steadfast they shall overcome two hundred, and if there be a hundred steadfast they shall overcome a thousand who disbelieve, because they are a people without intelligence".

Guru Arjan, the Great Martyr and divine apostle of Peace advises to fight a bitter fight against the five demons in human nature itself. In the Adi Granth he says (p. 1353)—Invincible is the army of the saints. Great warriors are they, humility is their weapon. The word of the Guru is their buckler. They ride the horses, chariots and elephants of the understanding of the Divine Path. Without fear, they advance towards the enemy. They rode into battle singing the Lord's praise. By conquering these five robber chiefs, the vices, they find that they have also conquered the whole world".

The fight against evil nature is pictured in the Maitri Upanishad (6.28). In Bhisma Parva 21 is recorded that—"They that are desirous of victory do not conquer by might and energy as much as by truth, compassion, righteousness and spiritual discipline. Discriminating them between righteousness and unrighteousness and understanding what is meant by covetousness, when there is a recourse to exertion, fight without arrogance, for victory is there where righteousness is. Under these conditions know, O King, that to us victory is certain in the battle. Indeed where Krishna is, there is victory".

Lord Tennyson gives a beautiful piece—

In Love, if Love be Love, if Love be ours,
Faith and unfaith can never be equal powers
Unfaith or aught is wanting with in all.

Guru Gobind Singh took up arms when everything else failed. So in Love for Love's sake he undertook to save the saints with his sainthiness and persuaded the soldier to take charge as a surgeon to cut the diseased part to give life a freshness and new lease.

Sawa lakh se ek larawan, tabi Gobind Singh naam kahaon. I make one fight against a hundred thousand and twenty-five hundreds and only then he called Gobind Singh. Guru this war of Love is fought with the spiritual energy. The inner situation comes from the *Amrit*, the holy elixir of life. By the potion of love Guru Gobind Singh gave a new life to the nation—making an ordinary house-holder a saint-soldier, with divine scholarship added to make him an integrated Person, a true Gurmukh. But war is not run by arms alone. Peace together than the sword!

The Sant-Sipahism

The concept of *Sant-Sipahi* or *Sant-Sipahism* is unique in the history of War and Religion. Saint is a man of Godly disposition and a soldier is a man of war. How are the two qualities or vocations reconciled in one and the same person is one of the fundamental features of the Sikh faith.

Most world leaders like Jesus, Abraham, David, Jacob, Buddha, Rama and Krishna are renowned as men of Peace, though the destruction of one or the other demon or the *dusht* (a person of demonical nature) is attributed to Rama and Krishna as we read in the Indian epics the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. But here the question of sides was more personal or family matter, given the colouring of religion.

Some of the famous names of soldiers like Caesar, Alexander the Great, Napolean, not to mention Hitler, Mussolini, Lenin or Stalin had nowhere near saintly qualities. Some of the Mughals were barbaric and even in the World Wars of the present century soldiers engaged themselves not only in killing but in other inhuman activities with unarmed civilians, women and children.

Although, the Bible (Exodus 5:3) says that the Lord is a man of war, it forbids killing—"Thou shalt not kill" (Exodus 20:1) but does not respect life where revenge is concerned "Life for Life, Eye for Eye, Tooth for Tooth, Hand for Hand, Foot for Foot, Burning Wound for Wound, Stripe for Stripe" (Exodus 22:8), as already noted.

Everything is fair in Love and War is a well known saying with most of the cultures of the world.

But Love is a swift of foot. Love is man of war. And can shoot and can hit from far" says Herbert.

Cicero, however, rightly reminds that—"Let war yield to peace". But Neville Chamberlain (1869-1940) has a very bitter experience to relate that—"In war, whichever side may call itself the victor, there are no winners, but all are losers".

The same can be said of Mahabharata. In the Ramayana, however, the defeat of Ravana is observed with Dushera and the victory of Rama the hero of the episode is observed with Diwali as Rama also returned from the exile of 14 years. The Pandava Arjun was the war. So did Krishna, the divine charioteer. But the word Saint-Soldier has not been used in any other case known to me in the world history.

The Sikh View

The Sixth Guru Hargobind for the first time donned two swords of *Miri* and *Piri* (Power and Yogi) and Tegh Bahadur was an expert in martial arts like his father, but the title of Sant-Sipahi I think should be reserved only for Guru Gobind Singh as appropriate to his life, love learning and longings.

Guru Gobind Singh mingled his spiritual identity within the Adi Granth, enshrining it as Siri Guru Granth Sahib to be accepted hitherto by Sikhs as the Living *Shabad* Guru. *Sabh Sikhan to hukam hai Guru manio Granth* as is the eternal order for the followers after the tenth Guru.

This concept in itself is unique in the history of world Religions. All scriptures like the Vedas, Bible, Torra, Quran are respected and venerated as the Word with God revealed to the Prophets but in no other Word is worshipped as God's Spirit or God. There is a well codified ritualistic procedure observed all over the world where Sikhs practise their religion in respect to the Guru Granth. In this, one can say that it amounts to the descendence of God to earth. The place where the Guru Granth Sahib resides becomes sacred, beautiful, greener and Sikhs apply to their foreheads the dust of the place and place their foreheads hundreds, thousands and countless times, on it. This sacrification is the creation of Guru Gobind Singh, along with the Khalsa Panth that he also created. He chanted *Khalsa mero roop hai Khas. Khalsa main nahin kario nivas.* Khalsa is my special form and abide I within the Khalsa. Here again the emphasis is on the sanctification

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of human collective congregation in the service of God on the earth.

The *Granth* is the repository of the *Shabad*, the Spirit; the Word as the fountainhead of light to guide humanity through the ocean of Life to the God's door, the eternal destination. It corresponds to the position of Head.

The Panth, being physical in nature represents the Hands, the seat of Power to defend and to protect. It serves as an Holder of the Torch, the Granth. The Hands carry the Granth to the Head, its rightful place of abode.

When the Head and the Hands are created, the Heart becomes the link connecting the two—the Shaster and the Shastar, the Sant and the Sipahi or the Sustainer and the Savior, in one. The heart with Love is the divine heart, with jealousy it is devil's.

Guru Gobind Singh can be called the author in its present format of the Guru Granth as he dictated the entire hymns from memory and introduced into the Adi Granth the compositions of the ninth Guru. He was himself a Poet of excellence to have composed superb divine poetry in several languages, enshrined separately in the Dasam Granth. He himself was Light incarnate, as well as the defender of the Light.

He not only created the Khalsa Panth, but in turn recreated himself an integral part of the Panth, thus following truly Guru—chela, the creator, sustainer and the protector in one concept.

The Saint—scholar—soldier; or the Head, Heart and Hands—Three in One, was the creation of Guru Gobind Singh.

The term Sant—Sipahiism used here in Guru Gobind Singh's personality is thus the cultivation of the Trinity in One.

It would be most unfair to remember him only for his supernatural love of a sainthood or by extraordinary talent of the creation, recruitment, organisation and perpetuation of the material spiritual energy in a saintly person. He combined in himself the three aspects of the universe—The Brahma, the Vishnu and the Shiva of the Vedic tradition, both in spiritual as well as in physical forms. His Shakti was not merely destruction, but it was resurrection—He was the giver of a new life.

While demanding with an unsheathed *Kirpan* an head he gave his heart full of All-Love to the newly hatched soldier, calling him his son, his own Physical-All and All and his own spiritual-All-in-All-*Piaro*-Beloved.

Guru Gobind Singh was the possessor of three qualities of God—The Poet, the Saint, and the Soldier. He was truly the King, the Padshah and to himself he addressed himself as *Padshahi dasvin*, though he disclaimed to be God. He recited—*Jo ham ko Parmesar uchre nai, te sabh Nark kumbha mein parhai*—He who calls me God shall fall in deep ditch of hell. I am only the servant of the Lord and have come to see the world play at the order of the Lord Himself. He was true in his mission.

Poet—Saint—Soldier

God is addressed as Poet in the Vedas. In the Rig X:91.2) the rishi pays obeisance to as :—

Most skilful with Thy powers,
Most wise with wisdom,
O God, Thou art a Poet
Knowing all with Thy poetic wisdom
God is the Poet of Poets.

Again

We call on Thee, Lord of hosts,
The Poet of Poets, the most famous of all.
The supreme King of spiritual knowledge,
O Lord of spiritual wisdom
Listen to us with Thy graces
And sit in the place of sacrifices. (R 11 2.3.1).

Guru Gobind Singh also approached God, like his father and great grandfather through poetry. Swami Vivekanandji described this approach as manifestation of the divinity that is already in man.

In his saintliness Guru Gobind Singh's life was a moral path that combined the golden mean between two extremes or Raj and Yog through knowledge a gyan yog. He was engrossed in meditation when called upon to enter life to defend saints and propagate Dharma. In *Bachitar Natak* he writes *Eh Karan Pralh mohe pathaoo tab mein jagat janam dhar aoo.*

Very rarely in the history of Religions, Prophets have before spoken like this as Guru Gobind Singh has that God entrusted to him as to how other prophets sent by Him to propagate God's Name, instead, propagated their respective dominions in defiance of God's Will.

Guru Gobind Singh had known of the 22 fake gurudoms at the time when his father was discovered as the True Guru. Even the Vedic gods Mahadev, Bishun, Brahma did the same, describing themselves as Parbraham to the people of the world.

The Guru was, therefore, ordained by God to take up soldiering—*Jehan tum Dharam hitharo Duist dekhian pakar pachharo*—and it is not then he acquired after birth. He was a born soldier, reality speaking a Sant-Sipahi.

Wheresoever the dharma was not observed catch hold of the evil doers. Guru's duty was *Dharam chalawan sant ubharan Dusht sabhan ko mool uparan.*

Dr. Tarun Singh emphasises that in Guru Gobind Singh's estimation "Holy Love and Holy war are equated. If you wish to tread the path of Divine Love, you will have to fight for the Divine cause." He considers Sepoy as a Prince as represented in Miri and Piri and in deg and teg (wealth and war) in this concept.

In Guru's wisdom "The White Hawk represents the philosophy of the Saint soldier or the yogi Prince"—, the white colour representing the spirit of poetry, purity, peace, wisdom and saintliness. Hawk signifies strength, power and majesty, as well.

The Blue Steed, the second symbol of the Saint soldier is indication of blue of the Sky and blue of the Sea, again signifying depth, vastness and purity and awakening.

While Guru Nanak spread the message of God walking on foot thousands and thousands of miles, Guru Gobind Singh witnessed the Play on horseback. From the Siwali Hills, crossing the Krishna, the Godavari he traversed much of the Deccan.

Guru Gobind Singh awakened the whole of the Indian nation, not a section of it. In so doing, he created and made use of the Khalsa Panth as a well disciplined army of Saint-soldiers and laid the foundation of 'Sant-Sipahism' in the faith.

plateau in pursuit of the army of the tyrants.

Khushwant Singh explains that—"in the minds of most people the image of Guru Gobind Singh is that of a warrior Guru. He said himself *Avar Vashna naki mohey Dhoram yudh Ka chao*. I have no other ambition than to wage this war of righteousness. What Guru felt in going to war was thought similar in anguish to Arjuna when asked to wage war by Lord Krishna: his was a very different situation. While Arjuna was to fight his relatives and teachers and friends but Guru was facing the fearless tyrants and oppressors who were destroying a religious people.

Guru said—"My sword strikes tyrants not men. A weapon is to protect the weak and destroy the wicked" He continues—"I come into the world charged with the duty to uphold the right in every place, to destroy sin and evil. O ye holy men, know it well in your hearts that the only reason I took birth was to see that righteousness may flourish, that the good may live and tyrants be torn out, by their roots".

The Vedic Rishis pray to Rudra or Shiva, who likewise combines in himself the qualities of Saint-soldier. Rudra is clad in a robe of skin and bearing his pinnak or bow (Vajir Veda, 16.51). The robe of skin is costume of the ascetic and the bow, the weapon of the warrior. So the combination of ascetic and warrior already exists in Indian philosophy. In the Vajur Veda (16.24) the hymn to Rudra reads:—

> Our homage to the One who has swift armies and swift chariots.
>
> Homage to the Hero, to Him who rends asunder.

While the Vedic Rishis prayed to the Gods for manliness, valour, conquering might and victory, asking—O God—make us erect in our walk and our lives"—"Give us God what we pray for—victorious wisdom, fame with wealth and heroes" (R.X. 36. 10). Guru Gobind Singh by administering Amrit made the weak into lions. He instilled the power of the Shakti through bhagti. He did not train them as soldiers, but trained them as saints, as a precondition to baptism, is to be understood.

The Vedic Rishis asked for—

> May God give you protection
>
> Valiant be your arms, so that you may
>
> Remain unwounded (RX 103. 13, also SY.A.).

Guru Gobind Singh asked for the sacrifice of head to enter his path. He made clear Kabir's saying that:—If thou desirest to play the game of Love, Place thy head on the palm of thy hand, If thou's threadest the path of Love, Hesitate not, to offer thy head—

Guru Arjan, the great grandfather of the Guru had categorically offered—Accept death first, abandon hope of living. In humility, be dust of the feet of all—Then come to me to be my disciple There was no plan for soldiary at the time.

Kabir had broadcast a call:—He alone is the warrior, who fights for the down-trodden, Who is cut into pieces for such a cause and forsakes not the field. The Sikh is thus prepared as a saint, Bhagat to give his head for the cause of righteousness before Guru Gobind Singh in the capacity of the Tenth Emperor appears on the scene.

In his Dharam Yudh, Guru Gobind Singh was "not born to annihilate the Muslim folk. His aim was to erase tyranny, injustice, inequality and fight aggression of the foreign rule."—He "brought home to the warring groups, as referred to the *Akal Ustat* the fact that Mankind was one and indivisible and that Ram and Rahim simply connote a few of the many Names assigned to the Supreme Being, and are, as such, all one."

In this spirit Guru Hargobind fought four battles with the forces of the rulers and inflicted defeats on them.

Guru Gobind Singh fought and won more than a dozen battles against all types of reactionary forces and vested interests for the sake of liberation of the masses from their clutches.

Guru Nanak with the energy force of Bhagti "fought wars" on superstition, casteism, asceticism, meaningless symbolism, social degradation, religious ceremonialism and political tyranny and not only won these battles, but prepared the people to take up arms where no other means was left for correction. Guru Gobind Singh utilised the awakened nation and with its strength won the wars to which in praise and thankfulness he says:—

> All the battles I have won with the loving grace of my people.
>
> Their undying love and faith has been my sole protection.
>
> All the glory, my home and heart enjoys are their precious gifts.
>
> Through their efforts and help I have acquired knowledge and wisdom.
>
> It was with the help of these people I have always defeated my enemies.
>
> For them I was born, through them I have attained glory and greatness
>
> What am I without their loving support—
>
> There are millions of creatures like me on earth

No other leader, general, prophet or Avtar has praised his people in the way that Guru Gobind Singh has done, setting a noble example of *Sant—Scholar—Sepoy*, and establishing the cult of Sant-Sipahism in his followers.

The Ideal Hero

To Guru Gobind Singh, God, like he himself was a valiant Fighter—In Akal Ustat he says:—

> Eternal God, Thou art our shield.
>
> The dagger, Knife, the Sword we wield,
>
> To us protector there is given
>
> The timeless, deathless Lord of Heaven,
>
> To us all—Steel's unvanquished might
>
> To us all time's restless flight.
>
> But chiefly thou, protector brave,
>
> All steel, wilt Thine own servant serve

Guru Gobind Singh awakened the Indian nation to the need of the time. The Vedic rishis in prayer to God Indra says:—

> May our arrows be victorious,
>
> May our heroes prevail in battle;
>
> Ye Gods! protect us in the shout of onset.
>
> (R.X. 103-11, also the three other Vedas)

Indian God was the Vahan, to which our people had forgotten the Rig Vedic hymn:—

> O God, Thy existence rests on strength
>
> Valour and Energy.
>
> Thou, mighty one! art strong indeed

To God (X.XIX. 9) a similar hymn prays so:—

> Thou art the fiery spirit, give me the fiery spirit,
>
> Thou art manly vigour, give me manly vigour,
>
> Thou art power, give me power,
>
> Thou art energy, give me energy;
>
> Thou art battle fury, give me battle fury,
>
> Thou art conquering might, give me conquering might.

Inspired by the Saint Poet, Soldier Guru Gobind Singh, our noble Laureate Poet Rabindra Nath Tagore composed a poem in 1858 on Guru Gobinda and later wrote in 1910 an essay on "Siva Ji O Guru Gobind Singh". Commenting on this Dr. R.K. Das Gupta writes:—In the essay Rabindra Nath says that the necessity of the use of steel in defence of great faith gives a new direction to Sikh history—" Khushwant Singh has called the martial metamorphosis of the Guru's conception of God, which has become now an important theme for historical research".

Needless to say, Guru Gobind Singh awakened the whole of the Indian nation, not a section of it. In so doing, he created and made use of the Khalsa Panth as a well disciplined army of Saint-soldiers and laid the foundation of Sant-Sipahism in the faith.

Could it be said that the current movement for Khalistan is an extension of the centuries' old call for liberation of the nation from the internal oppression, given by the Great Saviour—Guru Gobind Singh? If it is so, then it deserves all help and attention by the present rulers!

The Punjab Problem in the Context of 'Sant-Sipahism'

Viewed in the light of Guru Gobind Singh's *Saint Sipahi* training to Sikhs one is inclined to think that the Punjab problem is not a Sikh problem. If it is, it is the problem of the Indo-Pak governments as a heritage of the British division of India into two and now three parts. The Punjab is not a religious problem either, not the least of the Sikhs. Sikhs are utterly disrupted into a number of factions, which are based upon personal ideology of those who claim to be the leading and the leaders of the leaders. It is also not the Youth problem in the same way as of other countries.

Punjabis and especially Sikhs are the most versatile, virile and hardened people. Living in the environment of floods and droughts; plenty and scarcity they know that in the end they would come up in the profit. Their record in foreign lands is inspiring to anyone as worthy of admiration and emulation.

It is their faith, unflinching faith in their strength and in Victory, because Victory to these people is God's Victory *Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh* of God's people *Waheguru Ji ka Khalsa*.

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This is the true Gospel of Sant Sipahism clear to Sikhs and this is the secret of their *Chardi Kala*, thundering success.

In the "Spokesman" of 26-26 January 1992 a view advanced that for lack of autonomy is the main cause of discontent in Punjab, Assam and Jammu and Kashmir. Linguistic state system, in a country where 70 to 80% of the population is Hindi-speaking, out of 14 languages is nothing but absurd and stupid thought of injustice, giving a far greater chances for one state, the U.P. to easily elect Prime Minister of India on their own strength again and again.

Any Ministerial post is a very big power for anyone, especially in India. An ancient Chinese poem from "170 Chinese poems" by Su Tsong PO, who lived in 1036-1101 A.D. comes to mind in reference to this struggle for ministership.

He writes—
Families, when a child is born
What it to be intelligent
I, through intelligence,
Having wrecked my whole life,
Only hope the baby will prove
Ignorant and stupid
Then he will crown a tranquil life
By becoming a cabinet minister.

In about 1849-50, Punjab had only 2-3% literacy among the Sikhs. Now, although it has increased to about 50%, and in Chandigarh, where Sikhs form 90% of the population and own 95% of the property, literacy is well above 70-80%. But a Sikh of Guru Nanak—Guru Gobind Singh who is able to read *Mool Mantra* considers himself to be superior in faith to any highly read person.

In *Asa da Var*, Guru Nanak says—
We may read and read and make cartloads with books or pack caravans with them.
We may read and read, and load boats with books or fill cellars with them,
We may read for all the years and months that are given to us.
We may read as long as we live and breathe,
Yet, Nanak there is only one Truth that matters; all else is vanity and vexation of speech.

That one Truth is more important than any other form of knowledge is based on the Faith in the Guru in Sant Sipahism.

Sikhs have not forgotten and cannot easily forget the treatment meted out to *Sri Harmandar Sahib*. This has reawakened and refuelled and rekindled in them the dormant *Sant-Sipahism* with the energy and enthusiasm to defend, to avenge and to apprehend those responsible for the Blue Star Operation and events connected with this before and afterwards in Operation Woodrose, Rakshak I and Rakshak II. This would become a "Threat from Within" as Lt. Gen. V.K. Nayar in his book of this title has recently suggested.

Every Sikh in India or abroad, irrespective of his or her place, face or faith finds religious sentiments brutally and mortally hurt and this has to be corrected by whatever means available to the nation, short of armed encounter. Sant-Sipahism of the Guru will always produce more and still more and still more Shaheeds, with their heads in the palms of their hands, because that is their faith and that is their fate.

The very same Sant-Sipahism has time and again been honoured for shedding blood in the defence of their country, and time has come now to honour all for their heroic patriotism.

The words of President Theodore Roosevelt, spoken on 4th June 1903 at the Lincoln Monument in praise of his men in some similar situation may be quoted to make the point. He says:—

"A man who is good enough to shed his blood for the country is good enough to be given a square deal afterwards. More than that no man is entitled to, and less than that no man shall have—" Sikhs have a case that cannot be overlooked anymore by any nation: "For all have not the gift of martyrdom", adds Dryden.

Sikh psyche is so brutally wounded at this time that only Love can soothe it, heal it and make it whole again. This is the faith of Love that Guru Gobind Singh taught. He tore out the letter of unfaithfulness (bedawa) in the presence of those Sikhs who forsook him in deadly war and graciously pardoned them, setting a still further example that cannot be surpassed.

Every leader of the Sikhs today is powerless with the depressed masses. They face a situation something similar to that faced by Barnum's shepherd bitterly complaining in these words:—

My flocks feed not,
My ewes breed not,
My rams speed not,
All is Amiss,
Love is dying
Faith's defying
Heart's denying.

The Path of Love is the most sacred in the Sikh faith. Lord Tennyson's words given below will testify the Universality of Love in faith:

"In Love, if love be love
If love be ours,
Faith and unfaith can never
Be equal powers.
Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all.

Finally, it can be said that those responsible for Punjab stalemate can still affirm their Love and restore faith in Punjabis. "We can salute one another with a holy kiss" (1 Corinthians, 16:6). Let God, Be True, but every man a liar (Romans, 3:4)—it is hoped would appeal all parties in the dispute. If this evil "let us do evil, than good may come".

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Founding of the Khalsa

By : DARBARA SINGH KAHLON, M.A., M.Ed., Awankha, Gurdaspur

The day of Baisakhi is a day of great significance in the history of the Sikhs because on this auspicious day in 1699 A.D. The Tenth Guru Gobind Singh founded his beloved Khalsa. Before the founding of the Khalsa the principal aim of all the Sikh Gurus was to show a true path to the whole humanity to lead a peaceful independent and honourable life by emancipating them from the shackles of social, political, economic and religious slavery. The wanted to infuse in the minds of men the great reverence for oneness of God, oneness of humanity and equality among men.

To achieve such a challengable goal Guru Nanak visited many parts of the world. He preached everywhere that God is one, all men are equal irrespective of their class, creed, colour and birth, they should worship only one true God and by living in peace and love they should eat in a common kitchen.

At that time India was victim of caste-system, cruel polity, religious sectarianism, decaying superstitions and unmeaning beliefs and rituals. Guru Nanak raised a revolutionary voice against these vices. After the cruel execution of Guru Arjan Dev in the hands of cruelty and cruel state Sri Hargobind put on two swords i.e. *Miri* and *Piri*, to combine the spiritual and temporal powers in Guru. Guru showed the way to his followers how to lead an independent life by protecting their fundamental human rights. But still there was no dearth of traitors on this land who were the stumbling block in the way of independence.

On the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, Guru Gobind Singh analized the psychological predicament of the demoralised Indian people. He avowed for their full rejuvination. They could only break their religious and political shackles if they were fully fit by body, mind and spirit. Politically they were fully enslaved as they were not granted even the elementary rights of citizenship, freedom of religion and security of life and property. Religiously they were enslaved through discriminate rituals. So, Guru Gobind Singh wanted to instill into their minds psychologically a spirit of courage and confidence they might not become the victim of religious, political, social and economic tyranny in future.

For the achievement of this goal some eminent pandits advised them to seek the blessings of Durga Mata by performing a "*Havana*". Through Guru was an absolute enemy of such nonsensing beliefs as he only worshipped none but one true God yet he was agreed to prove the futility of such wrong rituals in the presence of his followers. The *Havana* was performed by pandit Kesho Dass of Banaras. When the goddess did not appear after several days, Keshu Dass skipped away. Guru put all the left out paraphernalia of *Havana* into the fund, he raised the unsheathed sword in his hand and told the whole congregation around him that the real goddess of power was this sword which could save you from the religious, political and economical tyranny in future.

On the eve of Baisakhi in 1699, Guru invited the Indian and his followers to come to the the sacred land of Anandpur Sahib. On the day of Baisakhi some 8000 people participated. It assembled at the site of Keshgarh Sahib. Guru came out from a nearby tent on the stage. He was looking very angry. He drew his sword from the scabbard and spoke these words, "Is there anyone among you willing and ready to part with his head for Dharma?" Pin drop silence prevailed all over. He had to repeat his words three times. On the third call a Khatri from Lahore named Daya Ram offered himself for sacrifice. The Guru seized him by arm and took him the tent.

The next moment he came out again on the dias with the sword smeared with fresh blood and again made a call for another head. Now some 'masands' approached Mata Gujri and complained that Gobind Rai had sone made as he was sacrificing the followers by demanding their heads. Better to discharge him from Gurugadi and put the elder grandson on it. However she did not pay any heed. In this way Guru demanded four more heads and turn by turn Dharma Chand, a Jat of Delhi, Mohkam Chand, a Chhimba of Dawarka, Sahib Chand a Nai of Bihar and Himmat Rai, a Jhewar of Jagannath volunteered themselves for sacrifice. After some time all the five persons were brought before the assembly fully attired in a uniform. They are known as 'Panj Piaras' in the history of Sikhs. All the people astonished.

Now Guru put sacred water in an iron vessel and stirring it with a double edged sword read the sacred hymns from Japji, Jap Sahib, Chaupai, Sawayas and Anand. Mother put into it the sweets. Thus the *Amrit* was prepared, Guru put into it the power of *Tap, Tej* and *Santokh*. A little of it was sprinkled on the heads of the five beloved ones and then they were asked to drink it in this novel way Khalsa panth was founded. After this performance, the great democrat Guru got himself he baptised by the five beloved ones. In this way Guru merged in Khalsa and Khalsa in Guru. Guru said at this moment 'The Khalsa is the Guru and the Guru is the Khalsa.'

In this way Guru made independent the Khalsa from the political, social, economic and religious slavery. He made them lions by putting the word 'Singh' after their names. He himself changed his name from Gobind Rai to Gobind Singh. The shackles of caste system, class system and social discriminations were let fall off. They were to leave permanently their old occupations, family-ties, old practices and rituals and religious beliefs. They were to merged into Khalsa and Guru. Khalsa was a combination of a saint and a warrior. As a saint he was a symbol of purity. As a warrior he was a symbol of self confidence, bravery, self respect defender of weak and downtrodden people, destroyers of the wickedness and tyranny. They were instructed to possess five K's i.e. *Kesh, Kangha, Kara, Kachha* and *Kirpan* and keep them physically fit. To keep the purity of soul they were advised to rise in the morning, bath and recite the hymns. They were asked to abstain from the things injurious to the health as tobacco and wine, second woman, eating *Kutha*, cutting hair and snatching the rights of the others. He wrote in the eulogy of Khalsa :—

Khalsa mera roop hai khas
Khalsa main hu karo nivas—
Khalsa mero ikat sukhrad—
Khalsa mero pai aur pata

Tega Singh and Gonda Singh wrote about the psychological effect of the creation of the Khalsa on the Gurus disciples in this lucid way, "people who had been considered dregs of humanity were changed, as if by magic, into something rich and strange. The sweepers, the barbers and confectioners, who had not even touched a sword and whose whole generations had lived as grovelling slaves of the secreated higher classes, became, under the stimulating leadership of Guru Gobind Singh, dongsty warriors who ever shrunk from fear and who were ready to rush into the jaws of death at the bidding of their Guru".

According to Indubhushan Banerjee by energising the Khalsa with promethean fire, the guru cautioned them" to consider their houses altogether as forests and remain anchorets at heart, to eat little, to sleep little and love mercy and forbearance, to practise humidity and patience and not to attach themselves to lust, wrath, covetousness and worldly love, if they wanted to behold the real soul of this world and obtain the supreme being." He told that Khalsa could only achieve perfectness if he continued to embrace the love of divine knowledge and devotion to the one true God along with military and political power. And if Khalsa deviated from its fundamental duties then Guru would not bother for them.

Jab lag Khalsa rahe nyara
Tab lag tej deo main sara.
Jab eh gahe bipran ke reet
Main na karoo in kee puratee.

At present the Khalsa should seek its realself. It should desist from infighting, sectarian thinking and defend the weak and downtrodden people. They should remind the sacred words of the guru—'*Manas Ki Jat Sabhe Ek Hi Pehchanbo*' The Khalsa can only attract the world if its actions are akin to the teachings of the great Guru.

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SASSI-PUNNU

As featured in Dasam Granth

By : Gyani BRAHMA SINGH 'BRAHMA', Ajmer

Indra, principal god of Swarg-Loka, Empyreal Kingdom who enjoys social and special and characteristic mention in Vedas and Puranas and owns a prestigious principality there, abounding in Gandharvas (Heavenly musicians), Ganakas (Heavenly dancerses and Apsaras) dancers and Nymphs and whose Swarg-Loka swayed ancient Greek prophets to build their Empyreal Kingdom (of pure fire and light); Lord Buddha to construct his Sukhavati; Saint John to give to Christianity his "The Revelations"; and which induced Islamic Bahisht inhabiting (Houris and Chilmasma) Fairies and slaves for the *Jannah*, and being ever apprehensive of his *Indra Singhasan* being snatched by some Rishi or Muni, deputised his aesthetically unsurpassed Apsra Rambha to descend down to *Bhoo-Loka*—our Earth—to situate Maharishi Kapil Muni's *Japasaiya-Mujahida* or exercise in self-mortification, the consummation of which might dislodge Indra from his godly sovereignty of the heavens.

Rambha succeeded in her sexual mission which resulted in the birth of a female child. On the fulfilment of her well laid sinister mission she ascended back to her godly abode, after floating the new born girl over the waters of the Sindhu, apparently washing her sins clean. Yet consciously or unconsciously laying unholy guidelines for mankind for similar nefarious acts and generating hatred and denigrating value and sanctity of girl child till this day.

The portrayal covers *chands* 1 to 51 of *Charitra* 106, covering pages 954-991. Total number of *Tareya Charitra*—Character portrayal of "Women's virtues and wiles," comprise 404 *Charitras* covered pages 819 to 1359 and chands 1319 to 7181.

Dasam Granth which enshrines these Charitras, Puranic Granthas and some sacred utterances of Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708 A.D.), tenth Guru of the Sikh faith, is the production of the Guru himself and some of his redoubtable court poets composed in unsurpassed gripping lyrical poetry in choste Braj laced profusely with apt Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian and folk terminology covering 1428 pages.

The present portrayal begins :—

Aik dinas Sri Kapil Muni thaan keeyo prayaan
Haer Apsra hoot bheyo so tum sunu sujaan

One day Kapil Muni resided to a place
Where finding a Nymph, to her he lost his grace,
How was this ? Listen ye men of wisdom :

Rambha Naam Apsra Tahoo Roop Nihaar
Muni ko gir so turat hee beeraj bhoom majhzaar

Beholding Rambha's charming watch
Muni lost his semen into the earth.

Gireyo rait muni ko jabey Rambhaa rahey so nihaan
Door Sarita Sindhu tisan surpar kareye pyaan.

When Muni's semen dropped aright
Therewith Rambha had conceived,
Floating the child into the Sindhu
She fled to Indra's abode aggrieved.

The floating child fell to the gaze of Brahma Dutta, king of Sindh. He rescued and reared her as his own princess. Since her aesthetic charm and beauty paralleled that of the Moon, Brahma Dutt named her Sassi (Sanskrit Moon) and in parental affection always addressed her as Sassia.

With her dove like eyes fringed in black lashes and brows and physical charms she :—

Jeet lagee Sassi ker kaha yaatay Sassia naam

She had won the Moon's glory
Thus Sassia was she named.

As she attained to her nubility Brahma Dutt searched for an equally graceful groom for her. His royal selection fell on Prince Punnu of the neighbouring kingdom. Prince Punnu was invited and Sassia with full regal pageant and glory was given away to him in wedlock.

Dhool nirdang bajey sabh hee ghar
Yaw pur aaj kuhlahal bhaari,
Gaavat geet bajaavat taar
Dhanavat dawn naagar gaari,
Bhaari bajaar bajee eik baar
Maha chhibyaar bhaaey mil naari
Deh asees kpaee dhanbaje
Ehe jodee jeyo jag chaar tuhaari.

Drums, mridangs in all homes did sound
Township entire was in super—happiness bound,
Singing songs and clasping their hand
The village belle thronged mouthing word unbland:
Thousands of fifes blew in one high yell
In super-charm guffawed the township belle,
The king waving his blessings did pour
"May thy couple happily live ages four."

Punnu had a wedded queen from his earlier marriage and a son too. She could not bear Punnu's super-infatuation for newly-wed Sassia and Punnu's total disregard for her. She was very unhappy.

Beyaah bheyo jab hi ek sau
Fab baat sun nrap kee bis naari,
Chaunk rahee at hi chit meen
Kaahhu aur kuro ak sur kaahuaari,
Mantra karo likh jantra ghaaey
Ab tautkau so eh bas ai sukhaari,
Laagi uchaat rahey chit meh
Kaahhu na suhaaeye peeya ko pyaari.

When Punnu's elder wife
Of the new wedding heard,
She startled in mind and said
"Else had happened, else I wished"
She recited mantras and jantras galore
To redress the wrong with tantra more,
She distraught now in mind lived
As if never by her Lord loved.

The elder queen hearing all tales of Punnu's infatuation for his newly-wed, she came to the town and witnessed Sassia.

Rein divas tau seyo nit maaey
Praanam tay peyaaro pala haaey
Laagi rahat naan kay ur so
Josay bhaant maakhikaa gur so

Nights and days his bed she doth share
His love over her breathe she doth fare,
To his breast she doth embrace
As a fly to the hole of Jaggery doth lace.

Incensed at love rivalry, and singed with love jealousy no less than a suicidal emotion in man or woman, the elder queen resolved to make a short shrift of Punnu, her own wedded and loving husband and cooked a plan of assassinating while shunning in a far off forest and crown her own son as the king instead.

Jaaniey kuaar baah kay rahi
Hoeye birakat mukhi gahi
Ghaal aapnaey pati ko kaahaan
Sout kay chhatar sees par dhaahaan

Unmarried I lived in father's home
Remaining life I shall thence don,
I shall slay my husband own
My son's head I shall thus crown.

Jan grahay chhor tirath nah gayee
Maana rahat chandan hee bhayee
Ya soohang ito rtandan neeki
Teeke lagal rajeshwari pheeki

Leaving my living home solace
I did even visit to pilgrim place,
As if breathing there sustained
On Monday fasts I remained.
It is better own a widowed life
Hereafter than a married pale,
Its sovereignty hath no kin for me
It hath turned all sour and stale.

She announced her perfidious plan

Khilar akhetak jo hanay
Hamray pati ko kaaray,
Tay sour kay Sassia maray
Jyat na bichehay joray

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If while in force shunt
Someone slays my lord
Hearing Sassie breaths no more
Instantly breaks her life's cord.

As Pannu's life reached its end—

Tacko kaal ohet jab dareyo
Punnu Shah sekhar sidhareyo
Jab gaidhey ban beera sidhareyo
Tak dhan bann aura ab anareyo
Lagey ner beer ko bhareyo
Turey wadhaaeye ghaaet dh kareyo
Tasko maar nap pann mareyo
Sur pur maanjh prad na kareyo

Singed in wrath, as the arrow struck
Up he pulled the steed and slayed by hand,
Slaying his victim, he killed himself
And gods'—home he made his land.

Usp haal chaakran bhey
Janak dhani nindhan kaye gaeye
Nrip daj kaha dhann nam jay bann
Kaha ramayenge hakkar dekkeye hann

The servitors were in a state of pain
The rightly lord has reduced to a grain
Should his mortal coil he taken to home
Or the royal armours to queens be shown ?

Nabh beant ein kau ish bhaeye
Bhrit sudha amaan kahan gaeye,
Jodha bade jwih jeh jaaeye
Ran chhit tup tah kann aghaaeye.

A voice from the Void had said
Ye servitors where hath thy wisdom fled ?
A warrior great where battling doth die
On battle ground, he remain doth lie

Tpanay Yankt Qahar Khan
Cesaro ethein banaeye,
Asave bastar leye laau ghar
Delin sandesa jaaeye.

Thus digging hone his grave
Duly well his mortal remains,
Take his steed and armours home
Convey ill-tidings pertinent pains.

Bnani sun gaadee tisay
Rueye pann bhrit bane,
Asave bastra leye laal kay
Baalreh deeye sandes.

Hearing the Voice they buried the mortal coil
Swift like the wind, they flew to the palace royal
Steed and robes of the youth of loving mane
Anon with ill-news to the youthful queen

Bindhee Baal jaheen had bhaagee
Chit chare kee chinan laugee,
Tah tau khapar chaakran daree
Aran hutee pejeeri hovay garee

With "luck thus high" the lady royal where she sat
She felt as if her heart had been thieved,
Quickly, ill-tidings she to her servants sent
Her face turned pale, from rosy charming red.

In her painful state Sassin immediately flew (si babaan) to the site of the grave. It simply bewildered her. Bewailing and crying she opened the grave. Jumping in she clung to the corpse of her lord and blew her breaths out never to return. It was her eternal Reehak Yoga. The learned poet sings for her chivalric deed :—

Marum sabhan kay moond gaye
Soffal mann baty tadhein,
Tanak bikheye ian ko tajaye
Peeya anur preet bunaaeye.

Death hovers on all heads
Successful death hath she,
Body in a moment deserts
Clings to her beloved he,
The poet philosophies the death:—

Pawan pawan, aanat anal,
Nabh nabh, bhum bhoo sang,
Jal jal kay sang mil baheyo,
Tun peeya kay sarbang.

As air to air, fire to fire,
Space to space, earth to earth
And water in water doth mingle
She in her lord's body doth jumble.

Peeya hit deh tawan treya dayee
Dey lok bheetar laye gayee,
Aadh dasam haatay lek deenu
Bhaant bhaant tuan nadar keenu.

For the sake of his dearly loved
That woman her life did stake,
And unto the region of gods
With her his soul she did take.
Indra shared half his throne
Diverse welcomes to boot were shown
Spiritually Separated

Maechari aur turheen kay
Budh ko kaha upaaeye,
Jal peeyee tay bichheraaye yeh
Tank bikheje mor jaeye

What leads a fish and Birheen's death
Sundered from water and the beloved,
Immediately, in an eye's blink
They blew off their life's breath.

Paap nirnk tey no duree
Kari sawat kee kaaee
Ai chit kope bidhaan kay
Peejau lagu aeyo tuan

Dreaded nought the hellish sin
She got her lord missilled
And flying in vollent wrath
Our hero with an arrow killed.

THUS the great Guru—The True Enlightener—has bequeathed to the posterity a parable that imparts a lesson illustrating two facets of the unsurmountable innate human emotions of love and hate embodying two royal women, one pregnant with divine love for her wedded man to the extent of dying for him selflessly when knowing him to be no more in life while the other brings the death of her wedded man to quench her fire of rivalry and jealousy. To add this, it exhibits the act of disloyalty of the servants, even in the royal household for mere the worldly lucure.

It is reminiscent of Maharani Kaikeye of the divine royal household of Ayodhya, how burnt with jealously she pervaded upon her royal husband unjustly for the banishment of Shri Ramu for fourteen years and crown her own son, from the same father, Bharat on the same throne. Equally it reminds how Padmavati blew her breaths off even on the false tidings of her divine husband Bhagat Jayadeva having been mauled by a tiger in the forest.

We very often debate on the whether the entire Baani composition of the Dassam Granth is Guru Baani or otherwise. Dasam Granth was built up as such by Bhai Mani Singhji after the demise of the Tenth Master. However, Guru Gobind Singh did not built Khalsa as renunciates or simply saints but it is fully militarized household of intellectualists whose womanhood plays parallel party of virtues and vices of one another. Dassam Granth composition equally describes parts men play in normal life. Though some parts of the Baani as convergent to passionate life yet wisely read, it imparts abundance of guidelines for caution against pitfall on life. Being couched in Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian and Braj literature it reading is difficult and now that in Sikh circles what to say of Persian, even Urdu is out, even the university doyens, many of them, know nothing of Dassam Granth Baani. It is the colour that Hazoor Sahib Management with only more than regularly performs Akhand pathis of Dassam Granth Baani charges (1500-5000) three times the Bhets of the Akhandpathi of Adi Granth, a pure commercialization devoid of any sanctity. Why a show of Akhandpath, begarity it is be sacred, yet commercialization and a doubt who read it understand it and safely swim over the ocean.

Only Abchalwaara Sahib knows, what Punnuya teaches the money household traders in faith.

Our Keertanias and Pulpitowner in their of repeated harangues sing Bhai Gurdas undernoted Vaar devotedly but hardly ever unfold to the audience the lid of spiritual and literary heritage Guru Gobind Singhji has left for us in the Dassam Granth.

Lalla Majnu dashit chaar chakkit jaal
Sorth Beeje gaaeye jas sagra vaal
Sassi Punnu dartt, koeye jaat ajjaal
Mahenwal nun Sohnee aey tardi raat
Peer nuraanda parkari gaaway prabhaat

Laila and Majnu were lovers known on corners four
Sorth and Beeja are praised for their devoted lore
Sassi and Punnu were lovers, the two fused in one
Sohni to embrace Mahinwal, nightly swam over the stream
Ranjha and Heer are sung for their traditional love unbound
Devotion of Guruas and Chelas is sung in early morning round

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SIKH WOMAN

Problems And Opportunities Into The 21st Century

By : KAILASH PURI, Liverpool (U.K.)

Woman is not merely a female of the human species, but she is a mother, daughter, sister and spouse, to use the proverb—a better half of the groom. A Sikh woman is no different. Guru Nanak in a hymn of Rag Ramkali in the Adi Granth, using mystical language reveals a scientific fact that *Purukh main Nar Nar main Purkha bhooje Brahm Gyani*. In male is the female and in the female is the male, only a knower of the spiritual knowledge can unravel this fact. But Cowley in the Western sense asks—"What is Woman? only one of Natures agreeable blunders."

Tennyson, however, is kind in saying that:—"God made the Woman for the Man, and for the good and increase of the world". Again the blame on the increase of world population is on the woman and both in India and China female babies are killed by abortion as unwelcome offspring.

Ever since the beginning of civilisation and the Adam and Eve serpent story in the Garden of Eden all types of accusations have been heaped upon the head of women. Even the Bible is no exception. It says that—"Give not thy soul unto a Woman" (Ecclesi. 9.2). But the Fascist poet Nietzche blurts—"Woman was God's second blunder". His compliment to God and Man is no better. He says:—"God is dead; but considering the state the species Man is in, there will perhaps be caves for ages yet, in which his shadow will be shown".

According to the Russian poet Chekhov "A woman can become a man's friend only in the following stages: first an acquaintance, next a mistress and only then a friend".

Sikh Gurus paid the highest respect to woman by equating the human soul (Jeevatma) with a female and God with groom. Granth Granth Sahib records many a hymn to glorify the love relationship in season and out of season in ecstasy and bliss. So marriage is a must to obtain this in life.

Problems of Marriage, Religion and Culture

Sikhism is a religion of householders. A Sikh woman has therefore to be married by the Anand Karaj ceremony in pomp and glory with the blessings of the whole family.

Guru blesses (A.G. 788) that —"Those are not the husband and wife that with each other merely consort. Truly wedded are those that in two bodies are one Flame".

The marriage generally is an arranged business, with or with as little consent, or through match makers. There are as many Marriage Bureaux both in India as in the West, who provide a variety of choice. But the choice is considered a big freedom or even a permissive act in some families, because marriages are arranged in heaven to live on Earth.

There will still be a lot of heartbreaks when we enter the 21st century for Sikh and Asian girls living in Western society.

There is no question of cohabitation, virginity is priced. Dowry is a bride price, even in professional families. Beauty is of some value in bargaining. This is the culture from which Sikhs have come from, the rural areas of India.

As I write these lines (10th February 1992) "Today" of the same date records the results of a recent survey called "The Relationship Revolution" conducted in England and Wales on marriage and family. Some of the results given below will be most damaging to the Sikh marriage culture and quite shocking to families to know the sort of treatment that can happen to their children, especially to Sikh girls.—

Ian Fletcher reports, "Living together before getting married will soon be the choice of four in every five couples. Just like getting engaged it may even become a formal part of the courtship process—Moving in togethering before walking down the aisle will be the norm for 80% of couples in Western Europe by the year 2000. In Western Europe, living together before marriage will become a majority practice, cohabitation will increasingly become a more formal part of courtship so people may go through a series of cohabitation before entering one which leads to marriage.

There is some encouraging news for Sikh girls, as the survey seems to show that "A small minority with strong religious convictions will continue to marry without cohabitation"—"But the survey warns that marriage could become irrelevant once the majority of people decide to have children without first being wed. Most believe a child needs a father and mother"

The most horrifying part of the survey relates to the practice of divorces, one parent family children would break the family pattern of Sikh people and would cause a great hardship to girls more than to boys, as inter-religious, inter-caste marriages among the Indians in the West are now becoming somewhat popular and the breaking up of such marriages would create inter-faith feuds, conflicts and even race riots which are a feature of people in the Indian subcontinent faced with similar situations.

Family Problems In Multicultural Society

Sikhs, both at home and in Western countries live in friendly family communities with both Hindus and Muslims. The culture pattern of the one community is intertwined with the other, as they are women of the Eastern world observing Eastern ethics.

The Rig Veda (X. 85. 35-470) in this connection declares of the bride:

"Be a queen to your father-in-law, a queen to your mother-in-law, a queen to your husband's sisters, and a queen to your husband's brothers". The woman given as bride is sovereign, sovereign, Roopvati raised to the rank of Goddesses Saraswati, Parvati, Laxmi, bestower of wealth, arts, music, love and devotion.

If the Indian follows into line with the Western world, how can all these godly qualities in her be projected? This to some is the dawn of the age of calamity. Even the Laws of Manu (X.56-57) states that "When women are honoured, there the gods are pleased; but while they are not honoured, no sacred rite yields rewards". Generally Manu regards Woman inferior to man and Sati and life widowhood are the fate of Woman.

Islam is likewise very clear about own culture (Quran, 4.25) "Each one of the has lies to others, so marry them with their family's consent and give them their marriage portions decently as matrons rather than taking them on as mistresses, nor having any secret affairs with them as girl friends. that goes for any of you who worries lest he may not control his impulses, however it is better for you to discipline yourselves".

Guru Nanak (Adi Granth, p. 473) affords the highest honour to woman when he says "From woman is man born, inside her he is conceived. To woman man is engaged, and woman he marries with woman is man's companionship. From woman originates new generations. Should woman die, is another sought. By woman's help is man kept in restraint. Why revile he, of whom are born great ones of the earth."

Inspiration From History

From the foregoing it is apparent that look for Sikh woman in the 21st century in the Western

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culture is not easy to maintain her cultural identity and also act as a good sister, daughter and faithful wife. Knowing this Muslim parents are already well advanced in creating separate girl schools, where education is imparted along Islamic religion and culture. The Hindus and Sikhs have in name tried to develop some sort of a Hindu and Khalsa College but their institutions are far behind in concept and practice to the Muslim brothers. Even Jews and Christians have developed their own separate educational institutions in line with their culture and religion.

Exploring the pages of history the Sikh woman would find many many examples of good daughters, good sisters, good mothers and good wives in all sections of life, religious, cultural, social and political, to inspire her in the hour of difficulty. I would like to mention the following thought provoking articles for much of the required information.

1. A Precious Heritage: A perspective on Sikh women in history by Mrs. Inderjit Kaur Sandhu—*Spokesman Silver Jubilee No. 1976; pp. 91-93*
2. Studies of Woman in Sikhism—*Spokesman, 3rd March 1980, pp. 3-4.*
3. Talented and Brave Sikh Women—*Spokesman Baisakhi No. 1985 pp. 17-18.*

The very first name that comes to mind is of Nanki, the elder sister of Guru Nanak who is affectionately called Bebe (mother). It was she who first discovered in the brother Nanak the divine qualities. Nanki was an ideal sister who bestowed all love to her brother.

Guru Angad's daughter Amro was responsible for bringing into contact his father with Amar Das who became his disciple and later the third Guru of the Sikhs. She used to sing Shabads of Guru Nanak within the hearing of Amar Das Ji.

Bibi Bhani is the most illustrious of Sikh women, being the ideal daughter, most illustrious wife and Divine mother. She was the daughter of Guru Amar Das, wife of Guru Ramdas and mother of Guru Arjan Dev. By her devout service to her aged father she got a boon for Gurgadi in the family, for which she gave sacrifice of seven of her dear ones. Guru Arjan was the first martyr followed by Guru Tegh Bahadur, four sons of Guru Gobind Singh and then the Guru himself in the end sacrificed his all and all for the nation and to save the Faith. Mata Sahib Kaur, the wife of the tenth Guru Gobind Singh was a living picture of humility and sweetness. She is said to have put in sweets (Patasha) into the Amrit, at the time of preparation by the Guru, thereby adding womanly sweetness to manly courage and fearlessness into the new community that was being created after baptism with *Khande Ki Pahul*.

Great chivalry, enterprise was exhibited by Mata Sundri, another wife of Guru Gobind Singh. She is said to have intervened effectively between disputes of the Tat Khalsa and the Bandai Sikhs.

Among the princely class, Jind Kaur, the Maharani of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a prominent woman of the Sikh history. Many women had given the sacrifice of their families during the Akali movement and at the time of Indo-Pak Independence.

These examples would, I believe serve as great inspiration to Sikh women in their hour of need and trial in Western countries in the next century. They would hopefully maintain the cultural and religious identity and contribute to the development of their chosen home in a dignified and respectful way.

Sikh women in the West and East have achieved great honours in modern times in their profession such as Doctors, Nurses, Magistrates, Civil Servants, Teachers, Professor, Members of Parliament, also in sports, arts and literature, but their views on martial and spiritual matters are not precise in line with own conference theme. I have therefore omitted giving their names to be on safe side.

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THE KHALSA

A Unique Creation Of Guru Gobind Singh

By : AVTAR SINGH

Guru Gobind Singh preached the supremacy of the people. He proclaimed that supreme power resided in the people. The people were the real sovereign. He stood by the concept known as *Sangat* (assembly of people). To *Sangat* he gave supreme position and advised his followers to act upon the wishes of the *Sangat*.

In his book, *Tein Mayer*, Puran Singh observed that in the constitution of the Khalsa State, the greatest act of the genius was when the Guru transferred the divine sovereignty rested in him to his chosen people, the Khalsa.

In assigning sovereignty to the Khalsa, the Guru comes very close to Rousseau's concept of popular sovereignty. He delegated supreme authority to the will of the *Sangat*. The Guru submerged his own personality in the Khalsa. He proclaimed:

"Khalsa is my true image.
In Khalsa do I dwell,
Khalsa is my face and limb,
With Khalsa do I live all the time,
Khalsa is my true faith,
Khalsa is my known prestige."

By advocating equality of castes, equality of men and women, concept of popular sovereignty, service of the people, Guru Gobind Singh was a democrat in the real sense of the word.

According to Dr. Gokul Chand Narang, Guru Gobind Singh was the first Indian leader who taught democratic principles and made his followers regard each other as Brother (Bhai) and not by *Gurmatta* or general counsel.

The Guru attached great importance to truthful character which is essential to attain national character. The Khalsa is to practise the life of honesty, life of truth, life of restraint, life of a house-holder and life of religion. A true Khalsa will not indulge in adultry.

According to Dr. Hari Ram Gupta, Guru Gobind Singh was wholly responsible to bring revolution in the religious, military and political life of Punjab. He regenerated a decaying people and created a new nation, based upon freedom of religion, justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. This was the mandate God had entrusted to Guru Gobind Singh, which he has written in his autobiography.

A born prince, he chose to remain a saint, slave of the Supreme Being, throughout his life. He was peace-loving but circumstances created by the tyranny of despotic Mughals he set himself against Mughal's tyranny, injustice and intolerance and declared when all modes of redressing a wrong having failed, raising of sword is pious and just. Thus, he aroused a strong spirit of patriotism and nationalism. He knew that it is patriotism and nationalism through which national unity could be achieved.

Guru Gobind Singh created a new Panth, the Khalsa, as he believed in theocratic democracy in India. He admitted people of all castes of the Hindu society in the Khalsa. By baptising, he removed all inequality of religious privileges. Thus, came the Brotherhood of men in which the lowest was equal to the highest.

Guru Gobind Singh did not regard religion and politics as separate. For him religion and politics go hand in hand. It is the religion which teaches moral values and moral sentiments which are essential for national character. And again, it is the national character which makes a nation strong. Religion and politics have a common aim—the service of man. Both believe in national integration. The religious spirit was essential to purify politics. He united religion and politics and, thus, spiritualised politics.

Today, if we remember his golden words, *Manas ki jaat sabe ek hi pehchan ko*, not only we shall once again attain national integration, but the religious narrowmindedness will also disappear.

Today the Khalsa has forgotten *Khalsa Mero Roop Hai Khaas*. We have totally forgotten his teachings and preachings. India is once again a divided force. Religious hatredness is weakening our nation. There is hardly anyone who can be proud of his being a man of national character. If we donot discipline ourselves according to the ideals of great Guru Gobind Singh, we are sure to invite disintegration. Do not forget that we shall never have another Guru Gobind Singh in the future to undo all this chaos.

SPECTRUM OF LIFE

By : Prof. HAZARA SINGH
Ludhiana

It is said that if a person faithfully records his life history from his childhood to his last active years, the text will turn out to be an interesting novel. Likewise, if one ponders over one's daily observations, it will reflect the attitude of contemporary society in daily life. It is how I experienced one day.

Ugly ancestors

The wife of a bigwig at our campus called at us during her pre-lunch saunterings. She kept looking superciliously at various pictures in our drawing room. At last, not able to contain herself any longer, she said to my wife, while pointing towards the framed picture of Socrates, with his flowing beard and half-naked body wrapped loosely in a sheet, "Is that old man your father-in-law?" Before the latter could reply, as if to hit the nail again on its head, the former, with her eyes falling contemptuously on the portrait of Abraham Lincoln, said: "How ugly the ancestors of your husband are!"

Instead of feeling exasperated or belittled, my wife felt amused as ignorance of a bigwig could pay us no compliment greater than that.

Strangeness

The same afternoon I and my maternal grandson, a smart well bred child of about 10, were to catch a train. Our single piece luggage did not necessitate looking for a coolie. Though in my early sixties, I was sure that I could carry it easily. As we were going upstairs, impelled by filial love, my grandson insisted that the suitcase be given to him.

I fondly said, "Dear child, I am not yet so old that I would not be able to carry even this much luggage."

"Nor, am I so tender now that I should not share any burden with my Papaji", came his prompt reply.

A railway worker passing by us overheard the dialogue, beamed with a smile, patted the child and, in spite of our friendly protests, took the suitcase from me. When we reached the platform, without giving us even a moment to thank him, he clasped the child appreciatively, bowed to me respectfully and hurried his way.

As I pondered over the two incidents, I felt that while the vulture culture is robbing the upper section of our society of even elementary courtesies, the common man still believes that lending a hand to a person in need is a social obligation.

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BOOK REVIEW

EVOLUTION OF SIKHISM

UNDERSTANDING SIKHISM by K.S. Grewal, Inter-India Publications, D-17, Raja Garden, New Delhi-110015, 139 p; Rs. 180/- (deluxe edition) Rs. 65/- (paper-back edition).

In this 139 page book, Sardar K.S. Grewal lays out a painstaking compilation of the lives of 10 Sikh Gurus whose teachings have a lot of bearing on the Sikh ethos, the intrinsic universality of this new and modern religion and evolution of Sikh history. The inclusion of detailed chapter on the immortal Sri Guru Granth Sahib on which was conferred the Guruship and revered most like the Gurus, has enhanced further the comprehension of Sikhism.

The author being an administrator, associated with many cultural and educational institutions and a journalist has risen to the occasion very appropriately to project the emphasis of the message of the Sikh Gurus for the young and old of all the religions and the significant role played by religion in the present day dialogue.

The first Guru and founder of Sikhism Sri Guru Nanak Dev was born when ignorance, feudal tyranny, and chaotic conditions both cultural and religious were prevailing. He was more spiritual and meditative. He was opposed to casteism, emphasised the upliftment of the downtrodden and elevation of women status. He extensively toured to preach his Divine Mission. The institutions of 'Sangat' and 'Pangat' were promoted to achieve such objectives. This made him more aware of the behavioural pattern of the various people and human values. A very appropriate beginning of Sikhism started with a right and earnest spirit. The teachings were followed by other saints as they valued most the human values, norms and problems.

The second Guru Sri Guru Angad Dev was named by the First Guru after putting to trial his disciples. He followed his preachings and was a scholar and poet. He simplified Punjabi script with Gurmukhi. He also cherished meditation and austerity in addition to spirituality. He promoted children's education physical fitness, sports, games etc. Guru-Ka-Langar traditions to foster sense of unity and love among the people of all religions were carried on. He compiled the hymns of Sri Guru Nanak Dev, alongwith his own in the Adi Granth. Sri Guru Angad Dev was responsible for giving another dimension of physical culture to the Sikhism, probably a forethought to the coming events of more chaotic conditions during the Moghal regime. This was a right step. One can visualise the broad horizon of the Guru.

Though there was opposition to the selection of the Guru, Sri Guru Amar Das, a devout Hindu and follower of Vaishnav cult was named third Guru as decision of predecessor was binding. He too was pious with all virtues of saintly character. He preached against superstitions, social evils and 'Pardah' system. He favoured monogamy and put an end to Sati. Intoxicants were not permitted. Sikh marriage ceremony was solemnized by reciting Anand Sahib and Ardas, death and life were to be taken as usual. He brought social reforms and thus socio-religious changes led to the broader impact on the society. The new dimension of social movement was on the right path of awakening the masses.

Sri Guru Ram Das was christened the fourth Guru after exhibiting his repeated efforts of determination. Also he got the blessings with seven generations of Guruship. This clearly indicated the hereditary Guruship on merit onwards. Golden Temple was built in the centre of the old tank 'Amritsar' which became the name of the town. Honesty was his main emphasis. He was talented, quiet and peace-loving as well as with literary taste. One finds his hymns in the Adi Granth. The Golden temple acted as focus for socio-religious activities. This gave more impetus to the Sikhism growth by concentrated efforts.

Though Guru Arjan Dev, was the youngest, he on merit of his obedience was blessed with the fifth Guruship. He showed the signs of an exceptionally genius and leadership. A distinct identity was significantly achieved. He was not hostile to others and it is worth mentioning that the foundation stone of Golden Temple was laid by a Muslim Saint. Guru Granth Sahib was compiled by him. Sikh religion got deep-rooted. Chanting of hymns in classical ragas with musical instruments added more fervour to the religious setting. He took a very important steps to promote trade and industry and also to donate tithe (10% of income) to strengthen the Sikh faith. However, he developed differences with Emperor Jahangir and became martyr due to atrocities inflicted. This great sacrifice of Guru Arjan Dev took a turning point in the history of Sikhs. His firm determination against tyranny, injustice and untruth became an additional feather to the religious movement.

The sixth Guru Sri Guru Hargobind was also trained in soldierly art. He was quite knowledgeable. He got Amritsar fortified and erected, Akal Takhat opposite to Golden Temple for discussing political affairs. He wanted his disciples to be "Saint-Soldier". Like his father he had strong determination. He, like Guru Nanak Dev, toured extensively for preaching. A socio-religio-political limb was added for a better and well-equipped religion.

Sri Guru Har Rai the grandson of sixth guru took over as seventh guru. Though he was pious and sober he did not mingle with people except his disciples. He was animal lover. By the force of the circumstances prevailing he kept the militant tradition alive.

Sri Guru Harkrishan was the youngest son of seventh Guru and at the age of 5 years he became the eighth Guru and so called 'Child Guru' or 'Bala Pritam'. Foundation of Sikhism became more cemented by the holy tradition of self-sacrifice, truthfulness, care for others, fearless resolve and by succession but no expansion on account of Gurgadi of a very short duration.

Guru Teg Bahadur, the youngest son of Guru Hargobind and the grandson of Guru Arjan Dev was the ninth guru. He inherited the qualities of his ancestors. He was sharp in learning and also took immense interest in Bhagvata Gita, Mahabharata, Elementary Islamic Philosophy, Oriental lore

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and sub texts. Military training was an addition. He was lover of music. He took to the heart the sorrows and sufferings of people. Moghul's atrocities were at the peak.

He was beheaded in Chandni Chowk and his martyrdom like his grand father had a very deep impact on history of our country. This supreme sacrifice was a challenge to the tyranny. Guru Teg Bahadur's message of that 'living in the light of God, there is no fear of death' very much influenced the mankind.

The great sacrifices by the fifth and ninth Guru opened the venues for challenges against the most inhuman acts of the oppressor. Both preaching and self-sacrifice were the foundations of Sikhism.

Sri Guru Gobind Singh the tenth guru who was in the Gurgaddi for nearly 33 years had to face a series of ups and downs and an eventful period, had mastery of martial arts. He too was a highly talented scholar. Self education he loved. He had confidence that teachings of his predecessors and the martyrdom had heightened the spirits of Sikhs but the barriers of caste system had not given way. 'Bhakti' and 'Shakti' were his attributes. He is known as 'Soldier-Saint' whereas Sri Guru Hargobind (Sixth Guru) wanted his disciples to be 'Saint-Soldier'. To overcome these he created 'Khalsa' the pure one. Such an organisation had a lot of bearing on socio-religio-political system of India.

Spirit of self-sacrifice obedience and to 'do and die' were the main attributes of his Sikhs. He made a significant distinction of this class by having code of conduct of five K's. National spirit and sentiments of patriotism are revealed in Guru's writings in Sri Dasam Granth. As circumstances forced, he was born, brought up, lived so and died in conflict. Yet it was holy one and it regenerated a healthy spirit, courage and bravery in the wearing away people. Interestingly, such a holy conflict furthered the creation of a new nation, a new social fabric based on justice and freedom of conscience so as to proclaim, liberty, equality and fraternity.

Eternal Guru Granth Sahib with a total of 5867 hymns and slokas in 31 Ragas in 1430 pages and was compiled by Guru Arjan Dev on 16th August, 1604. Since Guruship tradition was discontinued by the Guru Gobind Singh, he conferred to Guruship to the Immortal Shabad Guru Sri Guru Granth Sahib revered like the Guras. Being a a treasure of Philosophy of Eternal Truth about God, it also contains certain terms and concepts common to all India faiths. It is taken to be a repository of devotional thoughts and basic emotional oneness of the Indians and also an example of co-existence of human beings of diverse faiths. It has an integrative effect.

Attainment of Supreme Bliss and adopting of high moral and spiritual standards are the salient features of Guru Granth Sahib. Its teachings are more relevant in the present day, when the mankind is amid stalemate situation, to the path of peaceful co-existence. It is like holy water of the Ganges. Everyone irrespective of caste, class, colour etc can have a dip without any restriction. While the Ganges water washes dirt, cools body and refreshes mind, the Granth Sahib purifies hearts, stimulates mind and animates the soul. This is one of the most sacred embodiment of spiritual preachings. The nation is proud of the spirit of preachings of Gurus.

The author has brought to light the Gurus virtues and their teachings in a very simple, understandable language. One most significant bearing of Understanding the Ethos is that the evolution of Sikhism passed through so many phases but there has been a steady continuity of the thought alongwith some progressive attributes. Truth, self-sacrifice, tolerance, patience and perseverance, fraternity, eternal peace etc are the most well designed pursuits for a syncretistic co-existence in the material world of money. All of us will get more solace to fight against the vices engulfing the society. Only our efforts should be to make all refreshed about the Guru's preachings from the grass root level. The publisher has done a built-up volume in both hard bound and paper back. Portraits of the Gurus have been beautifully designed. As a whole the volume is well projected.

—Dr. R.K. Gulati

H.S. Rattan Honoured

In a brief and impassioned speech Giani Zail Singh, former President of India, appreciated the initiative of Sardar H.S. Hanspal for arranging the presentation of Maruti Car for Harbhajan Singh Rattan in recognition of his services towards Punjabi language, art and culture and handed over the keys of the Car to him with witty and humorous remarks. Giani Zail Singh also presented four-book sets written by Sardar Harbhajan Singh Rattan to eminent persons. It was recalled that earlier a Maruti Car was presented to Sardar Tara Singh Kamal, a prominent Punjabi poet.

Earlier Dr. Atam Hamrahi from Ludhiana, author of Bawal, Shri I.K. Gujral, former Union Minister, Dr. S.S. Noor (Head Punjabi Department, Delhi University) and Dr. Ajit Singh as also Sardar H.S. Hanspal, M.P. highlighted the contribution of Sardar Rattan made in the literary field and his untiring efforts to popularise folk music and propagation of Punjabi culture through TV and Radio.

Dr. Mahiep Singh who compered the programme said that honour of a writer implies honouring of culture and honouring of culture amounts to our respect and regard for the spirit of language.

The function opened with lilting voice of Laj Sachdeva rendering songs and ghazals of Chatrik, Gurdaspuri and Rattan.

Commomorative A.B.I. Medal of Honour for Hazara Singh

Professor Hazara Singh, formerly: Head, Department of Journalism, Languages and Culture, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana has been awarded commomorative medal of Honour for the year 1991 by the American Biographical Institute (ABI), Raleigh, USA in recognition of his outstanding achievements and dedication to professional goals. The assessment has been made by the ABI on the basis of complimentary reviews of his book *Yearnings*, inclusion of his poems in various international anthologies and complimentary biodata entries in the publications of International Biographical Centre, Oxford, U.K.

The Spokesman felicitates Professor Hazara Singh for this academic recognition.

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Gurdit Singh Jolly Felicitated

At a select gathering held at Indian International Centre, New Delhi, the noted freedom fighter and social worker, Sardar Gurdit Singh Jolly was felicitated by the friends, well wishers, and admirers, under the auspices of Gurmat Prachar Trust, Punjabi Cultural Society, and S.B. Dharam Singh Trust in collaboration with Punjabi Academy. The function was presided over by Justice P.S. Narula, former Chief Justice, Punjab and Haryana High Court.

The opening *Shabad* was rendered by Gurpreet Kaur.

Prof. Harkishan Singh, Chairman, Gurmat Prachar Trust, welcomed the chief guest, audience and the speakers and also spoke at length about the man of the function—Sardar Gurdit Singh Jolly and appreciated his multi-faceted activities in the academic, religious, social, cultural and political field with special emphasis on his daring deliberations and decisions.

Sardar Jolly was profusely garlanded and Justice R.S. Narula presented *siropa* to him on behalf of the gathering. Those who eulogised the services of Sardar Gurdit Singh Jolly included Sardar M.S. Batra, Secretary, Punjabi Academy, Sardar Rajinder Singh Monga, President, DGPC, Sardar K.S. Gujral, former Chairman, DESU, Shri G.D. Tandon from U.K. and the noted writer and Radio/T.V. producer Sardar Harbhajan Singh Rattan.

Shri I.K. Gujral, former Union Minister Foreign Affairs, released two books—"Jeewan Kaala, Sardar Gurdit Singh Jolly" and "The Sikhs, Tenets and Tremors", written by the prolific writer Prof. Harkishan Singh. The first set was presented to Sardar Jolly.

Sardar Gurpreet Singh of S.B. Dharam Singh Trust highly appreciated the contribution made by Sardar Gurdit Singh Jolly towards the success of the Trust as also the Gurmat Vidyala run by the Trust.

Dancing Mountain Rivulets

From up above in the mountains
spring the rivulets—
Shining clear their waters,
makes our eyes roll with joy,
When we see them quickly dancing
down the hills—
with their wavy waters splashing down.
The green jungles ecstasied,
by the soothing smiling waters,
dancing down the hills.
What funny rivulets
not bothered to unnerve others
by their sounds
still harm not over the hills
and go down.

—Dr. Jagjit Singh Narula,
S.G.T.B. Khalsa College,
Delhi-110007.

IK ONKAR SATGUR PRASAD

BAISAKHI PURAB: THE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS OF THE KHALSA PANTH

AT GURDWARA MAJNU TILLA SAHIB
ON MONDAY, THE 13TH APRIL, 1992

PROGRAMME

4-00 to 6-15	Recitation of Sukhmani Sahib—Sri Guru Harkrishan Sukhmani Jatha
6-15 to 8-30	Kirtan—*Asa Di Var*, Bhai Baldev Singh Ji Hazuri Ragi Sri Harmandir Sahib
8-30 to 9-30	Katha—Sant Puran Singh Ji
9-30 to 10-30	Kirtan—Bhai Charan Singh Ji Sradh of Amritsar
10-30 to 11-30	Kirtan—Bhai Balkar Singh of Jalandhar
11-30 to 12-00	Lecture—Principal Harbhajan Singh Ji
12-00 to 12-15	Nam Simran—Baba Harbans Singh Ji of Kar Sewa Wale
12-15 to 1-00	Kirtan—Bhai Darshan Singh Ji of Pilibheet
1-00 to 1-30	Awards to youngsters getting 75% marks in Punjabi
1-30 to 2-00	Discussion on Panthic matters
2-00 to 2-40	Kirtan—Principal Baldev Singh Ji
2-40 to 3-30	Kavi Darbar—Bawa J., Kafir, Bahodar Ji and others will participate
3-30 to 4-00	Kirtan—Prasang Dhadi Jatha Giani Khazan Singh Mittar
	Ardas and Conclusion

On this day Amrit Prachar shall take place at Gurdwara Majnu Tilla Sahib at 11.00 A.M. Interested ones may reach Gurdwara well in time.

Monetary help to widows of November 1984 massacre has now been enhanced from Rs 350/- p.m. to 400/- p.m. To meet this financial commitment donations may be sent to the Committee through cash, cheque, draft, or MO and receipt obtained thereof.

Note: 1. Baba Harbans Singh Ji has undertaken reconstruction of historical Gurdwaras in Delhi.

2. *Gurbani Vichar* and *Panth Bodh Sawagam* at Gurdwara Rakabganj will continue till 26 April, 1992.

Rajinder Singh, President — Man Singh, General Secretary
Tarlok Singh, Sr. Vice-President — Gurdip Singh, Advocate Jr. Vice-President
Gurcharan Singh Lajpat Nagar, Jt. Secretary

Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee

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